October
1927

# The BOOKMAN

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OCTOBER, 1927 VOL. LXVI, NO. 2

# The BOOKMAN

Burton Rascoe, *Editor*

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The papers said that Sinclair was going to make a Socialist out of Mencken. Whereupon Mencken gave out an interview saying he was going to make a drunkard out of Sinclair. When these two firebrands met the sparks flew.

*The Undying Glimmer* — *by* DAVID CORT

A disparagement of love by a modern disciple of Stendhal. Mr. Cort's analysis of the tender emotion will amuse or enrage according to the reader's temperament.

*Press-Agents and Press-Agentry* — *by* BERNARD SOBEL

Mr. Sobel describes the metamorphosis of a once lowly profession to its present position of dignity and multiple talents.

*Putting the Shocks into Shockers* — *by* VALENTINE WILLIAMS

A prolific and famous writer of mystery stories explains some of the secrets of his craft.

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JOHN FARRAR'S MONTHLY DEPARTMENT — REVIEWS OF RECENT BOOKS — SKETCHES — BURLESQUES — VERSE




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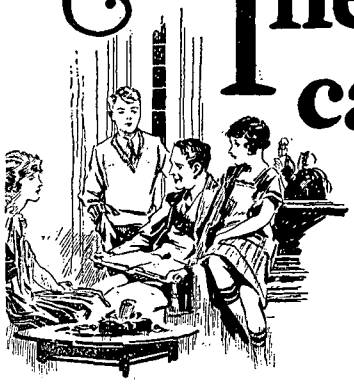

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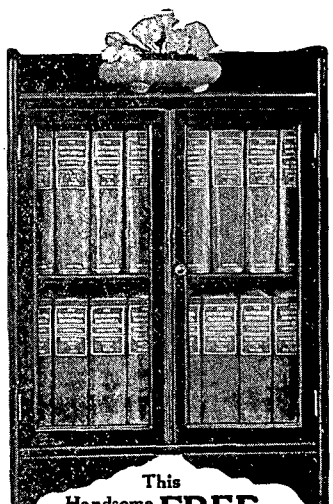

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# In the BOOKMAN OFFICE

WE are sorry not to be able to tell our readers anything about the author of "1909". We do not, it so happens, know who the author is, beyond the fact that "Halcyon van Moere" is a pseudonym, though we have made every effort to find out. The manuscript of the poem came into the office among the mail, typed on "flimsy" and obviously a third or fourth carbon copy; altogether a most unprepossessing document. On reading it and discovering its amazing qualities we hastened to communicate with the person whose name was on the envelope, only to learn that she was merely the typist of the manuscript, and that due to the author's desire for anonymity she could tell us nothing about her — or him.

The reason for the anonymous publication seems to be that "1909", and the rest of the poem of which it is a part (the whole, we were informed, will cover a number of years and run to volume length), comes largely out of the author's "unconscious", so that an admission of the author's identity at this time might interfere with the writing of the parts that are as yet only projected.

With this meagre information we had to be content. The internal evidence of the poem does not shed much further light; in fact it raises the question whether the author is English or American. Furthermore, numerous readings of the poem leave us in doubt whether it is the work of a newcomer or of some well-known writer. The power and maturity of the piece indicate an established name; but we can think of no one whose published work it resembles in the slightest.

RUTH SUCKOW has come east from her Iowa home and is living in New York. She is at work on a novel, her first since "The Odyssey of a Nice Girl", published two years ago. Miss Suckow points out that in her study of Elsie Dinsmore she has used numerous passages from the Elsie books, sometimes within quotation-marks and sometimes not. She adds that she does this "with apologies to no one".

"Literary Blasphemies" is the title of ERNEST BOYD'S latest addition to his imposing list of volumes of criticism. It is a series of essays in which some of the more celebrated literary figures and their works are rigorously examined from the viewpoint of an erudite and sardonic modern.

HERSCHEL BRICKELL is a Mississippian who has served on newspapers in various Southern cities. He writes a daily column of book reviews and literary comment for The New York Evening Post. He also reviews books in a monthly article in The North American Review. His survey of recent literary developments in the South was written while he was paying a visit to the scenes of which he speaks.

EMILY SMITH lives in Mayfield, Kentucky; she is twenty-three years old. Two years

*THE BOOKMAN*

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Seward Collins, *Publisher and Associate Editor*

Dorothea Brande, Managing Editor; George G. Livermore, Circulation Manager; Ethel Kelley, Advertising Manager.

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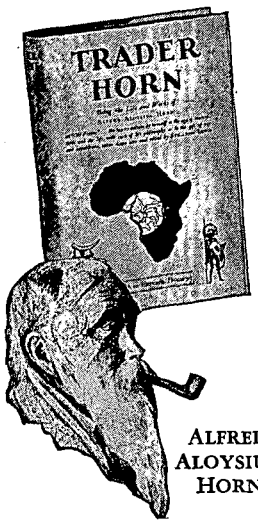


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ago she was graduated from Randolph-Macon Woman's College, and has since then taught school "in a certain swamp of Arkansas". She has been in New York this past summer taking courses at Columbia University.

Still another native of the South is EUDORA RAMSAY RICHARDSON, a resident of Richmond. In a letter accompanying her description of the go-getting methods of some Southern denominational colleges she says: "The material deals with fact. I taught in one of the colleges from which the instances are taken; I was graduated from another; and my father is president of still another".

WALTER WINCHELL has made himself one of the leading figures of New York's Broadway in the last couple of years through his daily column in The Evening Graphic, "Your Broadway and Mine". His first acquaintance with "the main stem" was gained from a somewhat different angle, as a song-and-dance man. Reporting and then play-reviewing led him to the present activities that make him the center and reflector of Broadway's endlessly fascinating small-talk.

ARTHUR BARTLETT MAURICE turns to an old favorite in writing about the immortal Sherlock Holmes. As he told us last month, in the old BOOKMAN days he and Harry Thurston Peck were such devotees of the detective and his medical biographer that cryptic references to the tales speckled their correspondence.

EDMUND WILSON has returned from a summer on Cape Cod to resume his work as Associate Editor of the New Republic. He brought back with him the manuscript of a new play. "Discordant Encounters", an assemblage of dialogues and plays, was the title of his book published last winter.

MARION F. NICKELL, a graduate of the University of Minnesota, has taught school, done newspaper work, written fiction, and prepared advertising copy for "textiles, flour, corsets, aluminum, soap, rubber, tooth-paste, and underwear". She lives in Philadelphia.

BABETTE DEUTSCH has published two books of poems, "Banners" and "Honey Out of the Rock", and two novels, "A Brittle Heaven" and "In Such a Night". She lives in New York.

EMILY STONE WHITELEY is an occasional contributor to the magazines; she was decorated by the queen of the Belgians with the *medaille de la Reine* and also received *la medaille de S. A. R. la Duchesse de Vendôme*. She is active in politics in Baltimore.

ANGEL FLORES is a native of Porto Rico. He has been in this country about eight years, and is at present an instructor in Spanish at Rutgers College. He has made extensive studies in contemporary fiction, particularly French, Italian, Spanish, Rumanian, and English, aided by a remarkable linguistic gift.

ALEXANDER KADISON is the author of two books on rationalism and of numerous articles on literature, philosophy, and comparative religion. He was born in 1895 in New York City, where he lives at present, and has written for American and British periodicals since 1914.

SHANE LESLIE is an Irish novelist who was formerly the editor of the Dublin Review. THE BOOKMAN will shortly publish an essay by him on Dean Swift.

LIAM O'FLAHERTY is the Irish novelist whose "Mr. Gilhooley" was one of the outstanding works of fiction last season. He lists, under "Recreations" in the British "Who's Who", "Writing and raising Kerry goats".

VINCENT STARRETT, a Chicagoan, is a poet, short story writer, essayist and bibliophile. His essay in Reedy's Mirror introduced Arthur Machen to American readers and started the vogue of collecting first editions of Machen's works. That essay was later published in Mr. Starrett's book, "Buried Caesars".

* * *

In these columns last month we stated

(*Continued on page XII*)



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THE BOOKMAN'S circulation has been nearly doubled in the few weeks since the announcement of the new ownership and the appointment of Burton Rascoe as editor.

News-stand sales of THE BOOKMAN have actually *more than tripled,* and subscriptions are coming in nearly twice as fast as ever before in its history.

The print-order on the first issue of the new BOOKMAN (September) was deliberately set five thousand beyond the most optimistic forecast of the demand, to provide copies for advertising distribution: *but even after drawing on these copies the calls that came in from all over the country could not be supplied.*

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Forthcoming numbers of the new BOOKMAN will be as full of interest as the first two. In addition to Arnold Bennett's *Florentine Journal* next month and the month following, there will soon appear a miraculously lovely fragment from a projected work of Joseph Conrad. . . . Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has written an amazing study of the literary works received by mediums from departed authors. . . . Robert Benchley, nationally known dramatic critic and humorist, will write for THE BOOKMAN on plays, vaudeville, night-clubs, and the other aspects of the amusement world. . . . There will be superb stories, poems, and articles by unknown writers, won for THE BOOKMAN by Burton Rascoe's genius for discovering genius.

---

THE BOOKMAN was sold out early on all stands last month. To insure getting a copy, place a definite order with your newsdealer beforehand; or use the blank on page XII for a subscription. REMEMBER: The subscription rate of THE BOOKMAN goes from $4 to $5 on January 1. You can get the advantage of the old rate by subscribing *now.*



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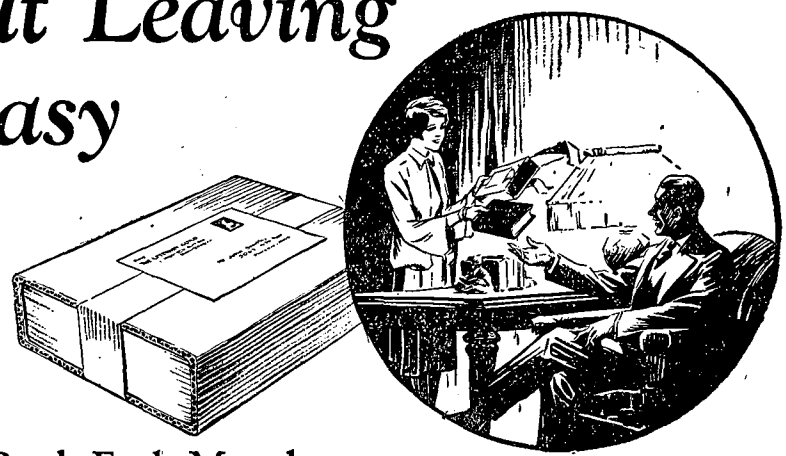

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(*Continued from page VIII*)

erroneously that Edward D. McDonald is a teacher at the University of Pennsylvania. Mr. McDonald is a teacher at Drexel Institute, in Philadelphia. He has recently prepared a bibliography of Theodore Dreiser's works.

We have received a number of letters of both praise and blame from readers in the piano trade on account of the article, "Selling Pianos", by Joseph McElliott in the September issue. Some have assured us that Mr. McElliott's record of his experience gibes with their own; some point out, that Mr. McElliott describes a phase of piano salesmanship which is being fought by the more reputable firms and the more ethical organizations of salesmen; and some, like the correspondent whose letter follows, are vehement in their criticism of the article:

"The Editor, THE BOOKMAN: As one of your readers who is a piano man, I was surprised to read the article, "Piano Selling", in your September number. The writer, Joseph McElliott, is connected with The New York Daily Mirror. Even that does not account for his lurid imagination. His ignorance of the industry that he assails is manifest. Pianos are not sold by trickery.

"He was out of a job. He obtained one from a 'Gip' piano house in Chicago, whose methods were fraudulent, dishonest and a subject for investigation by the District Attorney. Then, he generalizes, consigns the piano industry to extinction, and offers it a road to salvation by converting every piano factory into a phonograph and radio manufacturing plant. He libels an old, honored and respected industry because he met a 'Gip' in Chicago.

"I have been 35 years selling pianos. Have been honored by the Piano Merchants of New York City in serving as President of The New York Piano Merchants Association for two terms. It is my privilege at present to serve as First Vice-President of the Piano Merchants Association of New York State. I know piano merchants throughout the country, and I assure you that no member of either New York Association or decent merchant, anywhere, would tolerate the methods that Mr. McElliott portrays.

"Mr. Editor, in fairness you owe the ten thousand piano merchants of the United States a retraction. The methods described are not their methods".

John J. Glynn, New York City.

When we announced that we were changing the size of the magazine we received a number of protests from librarians that a change of size would cause difficulties when it came to binding. We wish to point out that a new volume began with the September issue, and so there will be no irregularity in Volume LXVI and succeeding numbers.

THE BOOKMAN *Edited by* Burton Rascoe

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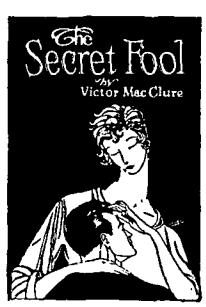


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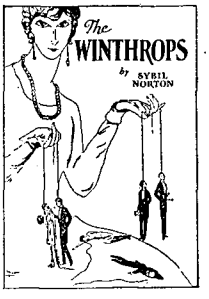


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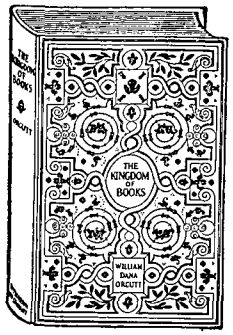


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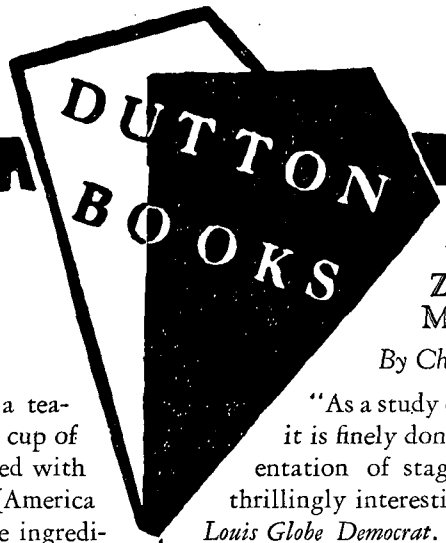


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"Then will you OBLIGE me?"

Oh! but the tone!

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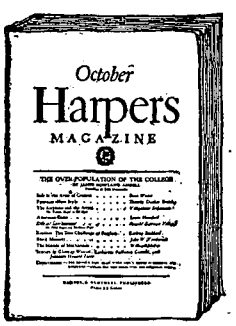


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OCTOBER, 1927 VOLUME LXVI, NO. 2

The BOOKMAN

# 1909

## *FRAGMENTS FROM THE ADOLESCENT DIARY*

OF

Halcyon Van Moere

(*Scottish Women's Ambulance*)

### MORNING

*Early to rise*

Dawn
Comes as a coral carpet from a splendid fire
(Dusk trips on a coral carpet to her funeral pyre);
Life is a wind-tossed ocean moaning low
Monitions whose true meaning I may never know.

A yawn
Of nascent consciousness — the day is young — yet I am old
As I am young. Mine is an eaglet's altitude, a cold
Survey of all that lies adrift upon this sea
Against the darker sea of sleep. What can there be?

As young
As I am old, as old as I am young,
My feet are cozy in my slippers — I have flung
My silk kimono like another self
About my rebel form, and mincing to my highest shelf



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Have flung
Its sheltering doors wide open to the sun.
Herein, a little sanctuary all of sin. And one
By one I draw its treasures forth. A scarlet box
Of bold Pall Malls, and with metallic locks

A book
That's mediaeval-bound, a gilt Boccaccio;
And in the redness of the dawn I read. Oh
Damn! I am too old to squander precious morn
Upon sheer trash. From such a problem I was born.

A look
Of bold defiance was my birthmark. Bright
Of me to leave the matches on the shelf, for I shall light
No cigarette nor thumb these timeworn tales. I need
Assume no affectations! Heed, my silk-kimono self. Oh heed!

Now break
That cigarette in two
And shake
This gilded smut away — must you
Be told a second time that that
Most natural to the moment is
Most natural unto you!

*Toilette*

With slippers kicked into a corner of the room,
And cold ascetic floor beneath my soles, I pass
Over to the mirror. What shall I wear? A warm georgette,
A crêpe de chine, or cold simplicity of calico? Why, calico,
Of course, and I shall braid my hair in plaits. Two
Twisted symbols of consistency, two staves of Mercury
To designate my winged thoughts. And that is done.
Ah well-a-day. . . . The day has just begun.

*Breakfast*

But dine with you, my family?
No! For I shall munch upon the sideboard
Where your formal drivel does not smear
The damask fringe, and where you cannot squeak
Your cricket news across a dear
Arrangement of inanimate cut glass
That's sharper far than all your wits together.

But still, I had not reckoned on the glass
In front of me, for there appears the bland

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Inanity of Uncle Hamlin. Inversion can contour
No welcome change upon that face. His hand
Serenely sails to rob the sugar bowl
Of half its contents there. "Such pleasant weather

"We are having." You! Not I. Beware! beware!
My barometer is falling. Aunt Celia's form now flits
Within the mirror's range, and settles like a cloud
Within her spacious chair. A cumulus she sits,
A ghost of crinoline tranquillity. Oh beware!
My mercury is rising, rising. There will leap a feather

Of pure flame, a scorching prominence from forth the sun
That is my inner core, for you within this placid world
Appear my gaolers — your frictionless serenity
A smooth-walled prison all around. Destruction's furled
In me as death lies latent in a lyddite shell or rests
The edge of a crusader's sword within its sheath of leather.

*Kitchen*

In its tedium breakfast has been fast approaching the breaking point, but now its ordeal is nearly over, for which small favour let my many selves assemble for Te Deum.

Kindred souls of the coffee pot
And kettles that bubble and boil.
Pots that clatter and soot that resists
My hands as they gratingly toil
To cleanse an aluminum frying pan
With coil on abrasive coil.
Knives with edges that rush to a point
And forks with a quadrant prong.
(This saucepan might serve as a helmet bright,
This spoon as a hollow gong.)
A column that spurts from the water-tap
To conceal it in clouds of steam,
A cubic frost in the ice-box
Preserving the other extreme.
Attenuated cacophony —
I clatter the dishes high.
Thank God for the kitchen's chaos —
Thank God. . . . What, dry
The dishes after I have washed them? I
Trust I still am sane. And uncle's in the bath? Why,
I do all the dirty work around this house and can't
Even have a morning tub. Now stop not to rant
Your Christian theories. Your brother-love does not apply
To uncles, legal uncles least of all, my aunt.

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And now
Down the tactual perspective of the darkened hall
I creep to vent my rage where night is still intact,
And like an exclamation point to all
The train of my unsentenced thoughts the keyhole
Glows. A point of light. The end of all my thoughts. The end
Of nowhere. Nowhere's end. Oh here my soul,
Far from the stabbing revelations of the sun, can blend
Itself deliciously with darkness — swiftly pour
Its trinity (unpressed by legions of detail,
Their hostile numbers howling with the dance of hours)
Exhausted to the friendly floor. One glimmering trail
Of light remains of the defeated sun — no more.
March on, O muted rhythms of the day. Go flay
The rigid door in vain, you trillion silent rays
Of light. Go dance your savage circle of the day
Around some other victim, O you gambit hours.
No varied sound from all the world
Of mutable detail, no single sound save all my heart
In primal rhythm thunderously apace of time,
Can enter here. No sight save Memory, apart
From all the steel-knit congruence of clanging streets
With chiming hours. Here sanctuary, let me lie
Till my struggle with the problem of existence
To accepted mystery with my sheer exhaustion die
Forever. Here I am mated. Here with the darkness I am one.
The darkness is my devil. My deity — the sun.

**Songs from a Darkened Hall**

Oh here
The pattern of my mildest thoughts
Objectified in tiling
Would a maniac-mosaic be,
Perhaps of Moses smiling

That his commandments unto me
Were made for sneers and slighting,
And God Himself a subject for
This frenzied stir of writing.

There is a God —
There is a God —
And I a mythic clump of sod
Enembered of His mystic fire,
Aflame with an unknown desire,

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To find the key,
To be the key
To things that are and are to be,
To all His haunting mystery.

I am a message in the sand,
The work of His unknown Hand.
Within my eyes, within my eyes
This world around seems paradise.
All with the world this morn is well.
This noon 'twill turn a raging Hell
And he a lie upon the sand
Inscribed by my unwitting hand.
Oh blind, my eyes, oh blind, my eyes:
There's no such place as paradise.

There is no god —
There is no god —
I am my own supernal rod,
Omniscience prescient with the past
(Each day is pregnant with the last).
There is no god —
There is no god —
The fire that is alive in me
My sole and only deity.

A threshold of delirium
And four-dimensioned dreams,
A mind that is a shuttlecock
Between its own extremes;

Hysteria in hurricane,
Thoughts of trebled thunder,
Hour-high castles in the air
Split-seconded asunder.

And now the rampant griffin of my rage
Lies a recumbent lamb. My hand no longer clasps
My jaundiced throat in fingered flame nor seeks a graphic scroll
Of hidden meanings in the empty air. I slowly rise
To shake a myriad clinging griefs away. I pass
Down where the pendant keyhole shoots its glimmering trail
Of light, a point exclamatory to the seething mass
Of my unsentenced thoughts, into the leering void
Of night. I clutch the door-knob's cold sphericity. The Day!
And all its muted rhythms like an orchestra
With my percussive pulse now leap to a symphonic play
Before the stage that I must face indifferently (a masked
Intolerance), the tinseled jangle of the mad highway.
I go.

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Oh!

Noon
Jabs like a flaming brand into my brain;
Great agony is local anesthetic — pain
Persistent through the morning yields reluctantly
To worse. Fierce murmurs now return to promise me

That soon
There will come worse, far worse than of the worst renown;
Faint murmurs from that tinseled jangle of the town.
Oh this is my eaglet's altitude, this is my cold survey
Of all that lies adrift upon the restless rhythms of the day.

## AFTERNOON

### Songs from a Littered Desk

*A Mes Amis, A Mes Amours*

#### To the Iceman

*(A Study in Hidden Rhymes)*

Today I may not study, for
My text to garish white now fades!
Small wonder for all day, and this
Pervades me like the meaninged thunder
In the bliss of nearness you became
Short hours ago within my ear,
Your step a glittering echo
Through all the clear remembrance that
I had of you — the undetailed
Ecstatic whole of you, sustained
Me and entailed a vivid hope,
Unstained by any fainter qualm,
That you would come again — you saw
A calm of hours an aspen quake
Become — oh draw not back in haste.
Oh take not swift departure from
This waste of passion-twisted words!
You faced the trembling truth in plain
Reality — you came! You came! No laced
Lines in a restless skein can fright
You now. I love you! Impose no fine,
However light, of absence on
The crime of my confession. Never
Once deny you haunted me. The time
We met conjured a ghost to fly

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Behind my wandering thoughts as leaves
In whirling sheaves pursue a train —
We met again! Your presence then
Was violent thunder in my ears;
The strands of your tempestuous hair
A subtle tremble in my searching hands
Ensnared! These very lines are vaguer image of
A love my trembling self less verbally declared —

And now let rhyme be undisguised and meter
scorned, oh darling, do
Bring ten pounds next, for while we kissed,
five pounds were melted into two.

### To an Organ Grinder

I'm glad I couldn't love you,
For I'd hate a dirty swain;
And your soul, the soul of beauty,
Looked on my own in vain.

I'm glad I couldn't love you —
But, my dear, there's still a hurt,
For I'd love you oh so dearly
If it weren't for the dirt.

Oh you're rude and most unmannered
And I more gently bred,
And I couldn't live on cloud bits
In a world of cheese and bread.

I'm glad I couldn't love you —
Yet I haven't told the rest:
For, my dear, though it may hurt you,
'Tis your monkey I love best.

### To My Pastor

With you I watched the moon rise as it never rose before.
For all your nearness you were further from me than the stars
That were my thoughts. To touch you was to prove you were not there.
Your vision and your voice are all of you I hold. No more
Was ever mine, yet these are vividly remote as spars
Distinct against the dying sun, or laughter in the air
From mirth unseen, or lasting as the rich unbelievable perfume
That haunts the candle-dancing stillness of your chapel's quiet gloom.

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### To a Sinner Reformed

Oh, after swilling vigil, after glass on glass,
I've often seen some limitless capacity arise
And lurching through the swinging doorways pass,
Upon the snow a sinuate design, to — early mass.

Thus you have drained the dregs of year on wanton year
Of life, till now some drowsy instinct bids you rise and kneel
To tell your beads, to pray, and thus you too I fear
Now, penitent before an altar, end your sinuous career.

### Lines in a Dress Suit

*Lundi*

How much I love my darling
My darling does not know,
Nor that I hold my darling
Wherever I may go.

I'll deem her twice as —— to me
The miles we are apart . . .
Oh sprig that dash with antlers,
You've the secret of this hart.

*Jeudi*

Last night I held my darling
Within long-frustrate arms —
The harder that I crushed her
The faster fled her charms.

The higher sped my ardour
The more her own did lag.
Such treatment from my darling!
Tonight shall be a — stag.

### Thoughts from an Open Window

Nineteen-nine,
Oh nineteen-nine, the year is an internal rhyme.
Yet I shall have no rhyme at all in thinking on
Its essence, and how calm, how tranquil is its lull
Of omnipresent domesticity. Oh love, marriage
And divorce, these are its essence. In cinemas
Projected polychromes illustrate amorous songs
And audiences join "In the Good Old Summer Time".
It is the summer time! And men with broad-brimmed straws go down

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To town each day, and Harlemwards return. Staid Harlem lies
With all its brownstone houses and its grey apartments round
This window where I write. The Norman spire that leaps
In conic silhouette from Memorial Wards nearby is flushed
With sunset tint; Eighth Avenue is like a moat, and trams
Go armourously by ( — a coined word that rings
Resoundant in its line). Oh nineteen-nine, oh 1909, gay skirts
Go rustling widely from waists narrow and necks high,
Down pleasant ways, and courtship, marriage and divorce
And children's voices, sailor suits on little boys
And ruffles, ribbons, fluffs and frills to cover
Sugar-spice-and-all-that's-nice, this is your nectarous essence,
Year of quiet, nineteen-nine.

"Oh the Bowery, the Bowery —
I wonder who's kissing her now,
I wonder who's buying her wine.
It won't be a stylish marriage,
I can't afford a carriage
In the good old Summer time."

From the top storey an unstuffed pillow case is shedding us an August storm of snow . . . and other things of less pleasant imagery. And so, my diary, I must close — first the window, and then your covers in time to get the tea.

## NIGHT

### Twilight Lullaby

*(For Wildrake)*

Night
Over your drowsy eyes now drops its darkling veil,
Dear Heart. There will be no livid bruises on your frail
White limbs from fancied rompings on the soft wan sweep
Of twilight sands that lie against the darker sea of sleep.

Light
Will not dazzle, there will be no haunting murmur in the waves
To stir a fearful wonderment. Soft echo from the caves
Of some conched shell this song now seems, the shore
Is fading . . . fading . . . till day's restless playground is no more.

The loom
Of hidden thoughts now weaves nocturnal tapestries;
What day-time shuns as darkly evil night-time sees

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As splendent arras-work against its own dark wall
And sunrise as a distant evil to eclipse it all.

Entomb
Me somewhere then forever mid the dusk and dawn;
Let symboled nymph and centaur, faun and leprechaun
Dance endless rings around the rosie of unending rest.
Fix Time forever at soft twilight, hang the sun forever — West.

Oh damn!
The buzzer for the garbage!
Up a little higher, please,
Down a little lower!
Down a little lower!

There!

No, we put *no* broken glass in the pail.
No, not last time or any time!
No, I didn't, I know, and Uncle Hamlin
wouldn't *touch* a piece of broken glass.
Well, all right, if you're so positive of it,
*there* — !

Slam!
(The old sow of a janitress'll produce another
litter of vituperatives for that, but I should
sneeze. I can't hear her.)

"Malbrouck s'en va-t'en guerre,
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine."
Or apropos of my Latin
which I've yet to finish,

"Caesar in Gallia vincit,
Caesar in Gallia vincit,
Caesar in Gallia vincit
Videre quid posset."

Latin, did I say?
Heads I study, tails I go for a walk.
Heads, damn!
Well, make it two out of three.
Heads again, damme.
Oh well, fooled myself that time.
I go for a walk any way.

"Caesar in Gallia vincit
Videre quid posset."

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## Songs from an Evening Stroll

*Love in a Doorway*

I am afire, I am afire.
Oh how can I control
The raging flood of red desire
Beneath this cold gray rôle
Of purity — false purity?
Oh fate, my changless fate,
This febrile urge within me now
I crush . . . I wait . . . I wait.

## To My Tutor

*Hell's Kitchen*

These things, O brother mine,
We have together known:
The music of another age
Descended to our own,
Commercial streets a-glimmer,
Night-distorted, grown
Delirium-titanic,
Mist-blended, yet alone.

Here smoke like muffled thunder
Across the starlight sails
From five fantastic chimneys
That plunge to deep entrails
Where starlight for a city springs
And brightest starlight — fails.

Upon a counterpoint of lapping waves
We've harked the winding of a river horn
And heard a Klaxon's startled gargle sound
As from the street-deserted silence torn
And watched the swift beam of a searchlight pierce
The darkness of the dawn near morn.

We've heard an eerie convent-bell announce
To filling streets, a once unearthly hour,
And crouched within the yawning portals of
(By man-made laws evolved) a tall straight tower,
At base a symbol of our pygmy selves
Against the sky, a shadow of our power.

Within the ursine cavern of the underground
The lion's roar of a draconic train
Between mad lights that moved with our own speed
To linear design, we've heard, and strain

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Of glistening wheels upon a bright parabola
Of rails against a shadow-intersected plane.

Mauve tracery of elm-trees in the morning pink
Fell round us on our daybreak way to home
Across the glaucous sea of Morningside;
The morning sidelong fell upon that Norman dome,
St. John's, high temple of this concrete Babylon —
This cubic Nineveh, this tessellated Rome.

There is a symbolism in the seven arts
That you, in all its fathomless significance, have taught
To me. Deep shadows, silences and sights and sounds
Conceal another age; whatever we have sought
Of art's futurity within this ageless atmosphere
We will have found no more than we ourselves have brought.

Such things, then, Don, on these dark ways
We have together known:
The music of another day
Half hidden in our own;
Commercial streets a-glimmer,
Night-distorted, grown
Within ourselves to seven arts
Mist-blended — yet alone.

*Dock*

The moon, the moon,
The mystic moon
Oh once a month is given this boon —
Unto its sphere of cratered cold
A passionate mood of mellow gold.
And so we women move in tune
Unto the movements of the moon —
Or so I'm told,
Or so I'm told.

*Powerhouse*

Down this thunderous thoroughfare
I am celerity aflare;
In silhouette, in silhouette
The very lamplight turns to jet
Beside my thought-candescent glare.
They do not care, they do not care,
These twice-illumined folk who wear
Clothes whose styleless rags beget
Theories I'd as soon forget.
They do not care, nor do they dare
To probe the depths of my despair
That they should live by toil and sweat

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To keep a lightning silhouette
Against this thunderous thoroughfare.

*Alleyway*

These window tiers, like hydra's teeth
Pulled out and set in line,
A fungus-phosphorescence through
The rows of houses shine.
Behind their light what darkness lurks,
Dark fen within a fen?
Behind drawn shades what drama damns
The haunted hearts of men?

Oh though I catch their wind-tossed words,
I cannot stop to trace
Them to their pregnant source or pause
A second's thought to place
Them in my ambling mind. O God,
Am I as one of these —
These brainless bodies wrangling to
And fro the night? No peace

Is mine; my nervous thoughts
My fevered tongue would tear
Out by its roots if uttered to
The cold unfriendly air;
No peace is mine and no release;
No rest from self-aimed blows;
No radiant inertia,
No ecstasied repose.

" — *makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.*"

Till now reluctantly I turn to home.
The day is dying, its recessive rhythms flow
To caverned midnight where for all its lure
Of gravid voids I must not, must not go.

For coming home alone the stroke of twelve
Is unpropitious as proverbial thirteen;
I run until my footfalls sound as one,
And shadows like the ghosts of relived days between

The arc-lights rise and fall. And now I reach
My room, resign my hated clothing, leap again
Within the occult toga of my gown
Upon the magic carpet of my counterpane.

O far-off sound of voices at my side,
O nearer lullaby of whispers far away,
The darker sea of sleep is rising round
Me now upon my languorous voyage to the day.

[ The End ]

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# ELSIE DINSMORE: A STUDY IN PERFECTION

*or HOW FUNDAMENTALISM CAME TO DIXIE*

**By Ruth Suckow**

MANY years ago there was born in a remote corner of our land a little girl-child endowed by the angels and Martha Finley with every qualification for a perfect heroine of fiction. Charm, beauty, background, complexes — all were hers. But we doubt if even the angels hovering that night over the snowy mansion could have foretold for the newborn babe the long life and longer influence that were to be hers. She was entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1868, but in 1927 she is still to be found in flourishing state and new bindings, while she will never cease to haunt the minds of millions of women. The name of the child was Elsie Dinsmore.

There can be no comprehension of Elsie without some knowledge of the background whence she sprang. Although Congress was not aware of her until 1868, her childhood was passed in those halcyon days befo' de wah. Her home was the Sunny South — the precise spot we are not told and no shaft of purest marble marks the holy ground, for thus does America in its hurly-burly pass by those who have helped to make its history; but situated in such wise that her own little sitting-room opened out upon "a grassy lawn . . . and beyond, far away in the distance, rolled the blue sea". It was that South which has ever furnished to American fiction the most saintly and brilliant of its heroines: Little Eva, Edna Earl, the Little Colonel and the Hard-Boiled Virgin. It was the South of pillared mansions, mint juleps, banjoes, jasmine, mammies, goatees and Colonels, highbred gallants and horses, and faithful old black Catos crying "I'se comin', Massa!" wid de misery in de back. Yet we are told that it was but a worldly region where the young folk danced in the evening, rode out for pleasure on the Sabbath, read secular newspapers, and engaged in worldly conversation before the coming of the little Elsie.

To cast no hint of shadow upon the auspicious entrance of the child into fiction, the mother died upon giving her birth. This mother's name she bore; and so closely did the little Elsie resemble the departed Elsie that the heart of the father was often troubled when he gazed upon her and a deep sigh escaped his lips; while around her neck she was thus privileged to wear a miniature set in gold and diamonds which she frequently drew from her breast at crucial moments and raised to her lips. Of the father, Mr. Travilla once fittingly said: "Were I asked to describe his character in a few words, I should say he is a man of indomitable will". His honor was unstained. Yet he was proud and worldly, seeing himself "not for what he really was in the sight of God, a guilty, hell-deserving sinner — lost, ruined and undone, but as quite deserving of the prosperity with which he had been blessed in the affairs of this world, and just as likely as anyone to be happy in the next"! In a word, a Southern gentleman. Horace Dinsmore — for such was his name — on his part acted well the rôle of ideal male parent of our heroine. Blaming the innocent child for the mother's death, he hastened instantly to Europe there to wander many years, perhaps in company with St. Elmo and those other Southern heroes whose hearts were but ruined fanes, leaving the small Elsie in the custody of others and granting her no place in his proud but passionate heart. Thus he paved the way for one of those complexes vitally necessary to the interpretation of any really great character: a sense of inferiority. The passionate adoration of the love-starved little heart for the unknown father supplied the other with splendid largesse. Of it we may say:



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O Complex thou wert great!
And Electra was thy name.

But Elsie possessed likewise all of those more material things necessary to the childhood of the Victorian heroine: male and female persecutors, a pony, a mammy, blots in her copybook, a worn Bible, glossy curls, and an aching heart.

But another quality set Elsie apart as peculiarly destined to be a messenger to her time and place. She was a professing Christian. Miss Rose Allison, a young lady from the North visiting among the Dinsmores, and destined some day to stand in a nearer and dearer relation to the little Elsie herself, had been "greatly pained by the utter disregard of the family in which she was sojourning for the teachings of God's word". That typical Southern family was to be led one by one to the cross through the persuasion and example of Elsie and the avenging wrath of Martha Finley.

As for Elsie herself, let her tell the story in her own words: "It was dear old mammy who first told me how He suffered and died on the cross for us". There was, moreover, a pious Scotchwoman, unable to open her lips without letting the *ains* and *aulds* tumble out, once a housekeeper in the home of the Dinsmores, who had early told the child of her total depravity and given her the blessed comfort of the tidings. Thus among the lowest began those teachings destined to spread through the example of our heroine to the highest reaches of the haughty and aristocratic Southern society and to bring it later to complete repudiation of the vile doctrine that men are descended from monkeys.

## II

But to begin our story. For we have forty volumes before us.

Now I shall point out to my readers the early workings of that golden complex from which Elsie drew that "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" which has placed her upon the shelves of thousands of Sunday School libraries. It is a bonny day when our story opens. The Dinsmore children are gathered in the schoolroom at Roselands. There are the proud Louise, the high-spirited Lora, the

*From "Elsie's Friends at Woodburn"*

impertinent Enna, the profligate Arthur; while apart from the others sits the one professing Christian, their step-niece the little eight-year-old Elsie. Of Miss Day, the governess, we have this significant description: "She was always more severe with Elsie than with any of her other pupils". All the while that Elsie is "bent over her writing, taking great pains", the profligate Arthur stands "jogging her elbow in such a way" that her fair copybook is ruined. Then we see all the others riding off gaily to the fair, leaving Elsie "weeping and sobbing" and taking out a small pocket Bible. Her inferiority is established.

But think not that the superior Dinsmores enjoy forever the fruits of their worldly scorn! You reckon not with the just spirit of Martha Finley. Let us take a peep into the future, for so the biographer is privileged to do. One by one we see the oppressors driven to repentance or hell. To Adelaide Dinsmore, always more gentle to the little

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*From "Elsie's Kith and Kin"*

Elsie, God and the author are kind. They do but take away from her that one who was her all, thus enabling her to hearken to the comforting words of Elsie: "Perhaps He saw that you loved your friend too well, and would never give your heart to Jesus unless He took him away". With Lora, too, the avenging hand is mild. She is merely brought to the edge of eternity by runaway horses, after which she is glad to receive the consolations of Elsie interspersed with appropriate texts. But what of those others? We see the profligate Arthur slain in battle; the saucy Enna deserted by the scoundrel whom she had wilfully married; while apoplexy strikes the proud Louise in her prime and she must die without the blessed hope of a glorious eternity. Nor is the unjust governess forgotten by either Martha or God. Many volumes have passed. We see the rude structure of a log hut built in a wild spot and evidently the abode of pinching poverty. An invalid, blind and on the edge of the grave, reclines in a rude chair. It is Miss Day. But there is a still greater affliction. This wretched woman, we are told, had loved that very man now wedded to the little Elsie, and "there had been a time when she would almost have given her hopes of heaven for a return of her affection". What wonder that the *ci-devant* governess is ready now to receive from Elsie appropriate texts and tempting viands!

III

But modern psychology opens up to us the dawn of another complex.

The wanderer is returning. Elsie's thoughts are all of that father. "Oh! *Will* he *love* me? My own papa! will he let me love him? will he take me in his arms and call me his own darling child?" Weak would that complex be, and imperfect the character of our heroine, did Horace Dinsmore love his child upon sight. He greets her coldly. Many chapters are to pass before the father takes his child upon his knee, and an enormous amount of weeping and sobbing and Bible perusal accomplished by the little Elsie.

Meanwhile, the keen eye of the modern biographer is able to discern beneath passing events the meaning of the whole. In the great pattern of existence, the life of Elsie Dinsmore shows a two-fold purpose of its creator. One branch of this purpose is the ideal perfection of the character of our heroine herself; the other is the salvation by her of Dixie impersonated in the proud and worldly Horace Dinsmore.

For we are told many times that our little Elsie is "not yet perfect". And without that second, more than golden — that diamond! — complex, so beneficently bestowed upon her by a far-seeing creator and now brought to light for the first time by an all-seeing biographer, it is plain that later generations would never have heard the name of Elsie Dinsmore. Elsie's life hereafter is but a cheerful carrying-out of the great commandment: Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land. Immediate, unquestioning obedi-

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ence is demanded by Mr. Dinsmore. Many are the tests to which the little girl must submit through the long pages to determine the perfect subordination of her will to his. Our readers will recall them. Meat, hot cakes, sweetmeats and coffee — the most tempting viands of the South — are taken away from the unprotesting child and dry bread and water frequently substituted. She is separated from her little companions, forbidden to play jack-stones, sent away from the merry-making to keep an early bedtime, and sits at the table in perfect silence eating whatever her father sees fit to put upon her plate. She is never allowed to ask why. "All you have to do is obey. Papa knows best." Under these highly favorable conditions, love for her father waxes stronger and stronger until it almost fills the little breast.

But in spite of her cheerful, unquestioning obedience, we must remember that our heroine is "not yet perfect". In fact, she stands in the greatest spiritual peril. It is all too likely that in her absorbing complex she will forget her Heavenly Father in submission to the earthly one. "Do you love Jesus?" the father wonderingly asks her. "Oh! yes, sir; very *very* much; even better than I love you, my own dear papa." But more and still severer tests must be visited upon our Elsie in all loving-kindness until the thesis of the biographer has been proved.

We may pass over the less agonizing of these ordeals until we come to that awful crisis forgotten by no disciple of the little heroine, and serving as well to bring upon the scene in his true importance one of whom we shall hear much hereafter: Mr. Travilla.

It is the Sabbath. At Roselands a goodly company is gathered. But ah, what a scene! "They were nearly all gentlemen, and were now collected in the drawing-room laughing, jesting, talking politics, and conversing with each other and the ladies upon various worldly topics, apparently quite forgetful that it was the Lord's day." One of the gentlemen has received a glowing account of the precocious musical talent of the little Elsie, and has now conceived a great desire to hear her play and sing. "I shall be most happy to gratify you," replies the proud young father. And he pulled the bell-rope. Ere she obeyed the call, Elsie "knelt down for a moment and prayed earnestly for strength to do right". For as luck would have it, it was a secular piece of music which the father had chosen for her display.

"Dear papa, you know this is the holy Sabbath day."

"Well, my daughter, and what of that? *I* consider this song perfectly proper to be sung today, and that ought to satisfy you."

"Dear papa, I *cannot* break the Sabbath."

It has been evident all along that Horace Dinsmore is one of those typical men who are stern but kind. He is now not even kind. He speaks in thundering tones:

"Elsie, you shall sit there until you obey me, though it shall be *until* tomorrow morning."

Hours passed. One by one the guests came in kindly mood to beg the child to obey her earthly father and commit the more deadly sin of disobeying that father who is in heaven. She answered with appropriate texts. Day passes into night. The child is alone — when suddenly, to the gentlemen conversing in the portico, there comes a sound as of something falling! It is Mr. Travilla who rushes into the drawing-room, raises the unconscious child in his arms, with her fair face, her curls, and her white dress all dabbled in blood, while he addresses to Mr. Dinsmore those thrilling words that have rung down the ages:

"Dinsmore, you're a brute!"

## IV

Surely it has been proved that the little Elsie loves her Heavenly Father! Mr. Dinsmore was made to tremble with fear that the gentle spirit had taken its flight; and while nothing could break his indomitable will, she was not forced to play the song until the dawn of a secular week-day. But do not forget that we are viewing this life, not merely from a single, but from a double viewpoint! Horace Dinsmore must be brought to his knees.

Well into the second volume, when he has grown dearly to love his little daughter, often passing his hand caressingly over the

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glossy curls and holding her for hours upon his knee, the insidious process begins unseen by any but the biographer. Mr. Dinsmore falls ill of a low fever. Ah, these were happy days for the little Elsie! And she proved a capital nurse, so that her father grew almost to reciprocate the violence of the complex. But there are breakers ahead. Our author warns us with appropriate texts and quotations from the poets.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,"

and again:

"The storm of grief bears hard upon her youth,
And bends her, like a drooping flower, to earth."

That dreadful Sabbath rolls 'round again. Mr. Dinsmore, his feverish mind weary at last of appropriate texts even when read by that sweet voice, bids Elsie bring the book that she was reading yesterday. Oh, now we are approaching a catastrophe even more awful than the fall from the piano stool! For as luck would have it, this book was "simply a fictitious moral tale, without a particle of religious truth in it, and, Elsie's conscience told her, entirely unfit for Sabbath reading". Now must our little Southern beauty be tested sure enough!

"Oh, papa, please do not ask me to read that book today."

"Elsie, I do not *ask* you to read that book, I *command* you to do it, and what is more, *I intend to be obeyed.*"

The italics are Martha Finley's.

In every way the child is tested. "Why, my daughter," the father says in gentler mood, "I have seen ministers reading worse books than that on the Sabbath." Even that does not move her. She is banished from the presence of her suffering father, to see him no more until she comes ready to offer cheerful, instant, implicit obedience to *his word*. Elsie had never before got through such a quantity of weeping and sobbing, while her little Bible was well-nigh worn to shreds. But Mr. Dinsmore's word was as the laws of the Medes and Persians, his indomitable will remained unbroken, he refused to come to the Saviour; and even when he was brought to death's door by the shock of his child's disobedience, her meek and gentle spirit did not yield. At length he decided to leave her. Once more he would try to forget his sorrow by European wanderings. He left without one kiss.

"When thus left alone the little Elsie fell upon her knees, weeping and sobbing." From that day she pined. Still the tests came thicker and thicker upon her. Some were in the nature of worldly temptations. For Elsie was not yet perfect. She was led through the rooms of a splendid mansion, fitted with every elegance that could be supplied by taste, money and the advantages of foreign travel, and told that if she would but yield she might live there by her father's side. Finally came the awful news that if she remained obdurate, her father had determined to send her to a convent.

Then the overburdened little heart broke indeed.

"Save me! Tell papa I would rather he would kill me at once than send me to such a place."

For even before the organization of the first knights of the pillowslip, the horrors of such abodes of wickedness were well known. Although Elsie might not peruse novels, we are told that "much of her reading had been on the subject of Popery and Papal institutions; she had pored over histories of the terrible tortures of the Inquisition, and stories of martyrs and captive nuns". Her views on the subject, indeed, have quite a modern ring.

"They will try to make me go to mass, and pray to the Virgin, and bow down to the crucifixes; and when I refuse, they will put me in a dungeon and torture me. They will hide me from papa when he comes, and tell him that I want to take the veil, and refuse to see him; or else they will say that I am dead and buried."

To those familiar with the processes of fiction, it will be no astonishment to learn that ere morning Elsie had fallen into a raving fit of brain fever; that her glossy curls were all severed; and that when the agonized father at last returned, he found his daughter tossing and raving in the wildest delirium, now shrieking with fear, now laughing an

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unnatural hysterical laugh, with the soft light in her eyes changed to the glare of insanity. The father paced his room like a caged lion. But still he did not acknowledge his Saviour. Then Martha Finley decided upon a stroke so daring that none but a genius might venture its use. Since the indomitable will of the Southern gentleman refused to break when his child tottered on the brink of the grave, Martha would push her over! We see the doctor turning to his fellow-watchers with a look there was no mistaking. We hear others than Elsie weeping and sobbing. And the father? What of him? Ah, glorious tidings! For when a little packet was thrust into his hand, containing the worn Bible and a glossy curl from his lost darling, his indomitable will *broke* and he acknowledged the loving-kindness of his Saviour! . . . Even better than that, to the human heart of the reader, are the tidings that "it was his turn now to long, with an *unutterable* longing, for one caress".

"Quick! quick! Aunt Chloe, throw open that shutter wide. I thought I felt a little warmth about the heart, and — yes! yes! there *is* a slight quivering of the eyelid. She may live yet!"

When the father next saw his darling, he told her welcome news.

"I have learned to look upon you now, not as absolutely my own, but as belonging first to Him, and only lent to me for a time; and I know that I will have to give an account of my stewardship. And now, dear one, we are travelling the same road at last."

*From "Christmas With Grandmother Elsie"*

## V

Ah, these were happy days for the little Elsie! Her father promised her to bring the servants together every morning and evening for family worship. We are told that the two were more like lovers than like father and daughter. One complex answered another. And even when the father took to wife that sincere professing Christian, Miss Rose Allison, the little Elsie did not lose first place in his heart. He lavished upon her pearl necklaces, two or three gold watches, and a dear little pony. But Elsie was now indeed perfect. Still her father exacted immediate, implicit, unquestioning obedience; but only as a steward.

And Elsie's Heavenly Father likewise was stern but kind. A few minor trials for the Dinsmores are scattered through the next thirty-eight volumes, but I doubt if ever a typical Southern family has been so blessed. Elsie's hair returned in ringlets. As she grew, she received many offers of marriage from the neighboring planters. But, as her father told her while he folded her to his heart: "My darling, you are mine. You belong entirely to me". While Elsie returned "Yes, papa", looking up with the same loving smile. Once a villain wooed her. But to her papa's stern commands she yielded only immediate, implicit, unquestioning obedience. And that "papa knew best" was justified when she discovered that the wretch to whom she had all but yielded the treasure of her lips "had been tried for

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man-slaughter and forgery, found guilty on both charges, and sentenced to the State's Prison". Mr. Dinsmore took his daughter abroad where counts, lords and dukes hung upon her smiles and threw their coronets at her feet. But her heart was reserved for the one who had in secret loved her for years. "Oh, my darling — could you, is it — can it be — " It was. Ah, these were sad days for Mr. Dinsmore! "My precious one, I don't know how to resign you to another." But do not fear the introduction of sex into the story of our perfect heroine. This is a biography for Boston. We are told that there was "indeed nothing sentimental" in the conduct of the lovers; "their courtship was disturbed by no feverish heat of passion". The fortunate lover? Oh — Mr. Travilla!

Ever after, Martha Finley watches over the Dinsmores. When Civil War hits the South, they are fortunately embarked upon a long stay in Europe, their fortunes invested in foreign bonds, and their mansion set back from the road to escape the eyes of Yankee marauders. Elsie passes many years with her loved ones at the home of Mr. Travilla. She seems to grow younger with each passing page; and so gloriously has the inspiration of her complexes stood her in stead, that upon her fiftieth birthday we are told with great particularity that there are no silver threads in her hair and no lines in her forehead or about the mouth or eyes — she is still worthy to be loved. Many happy times are in store for the family which increases rapidly volume by volume. Elsie yachted, Elsie visited Nantucket, Elsie journeyed on inland waters, Elsie went to the World's Fair.

Nor was she fated always to be separated from dear papa's side. Mr. Travilla, ever kind and generous, and lacking only the indomitable will to be also a perfect Southern gentleman, chivalrously relinquished his claim. Sorrowfully we reach a volume entitled "Elsie's Widowhood".

Ah, these were happy days for the little Elsie! She had dear papa forever by her side and was privileged to yield him the most cheerful obedience. Once again Grandmother Elsie sat upon his knee while he passed his hand caressingly over the glossy curls. "My own! Was ever father blessed with so sweet a daughter?" And when she thought of Mr. Travilla, she had the ineffable consolation of knowing how well it was with him.

Still the volumes pass. Infinite now are the little Horaces and the little Elsies. Still the days of our heroine are long in the land. Sad? Ah, you forget the well-worn Bible. Proud of her riches? Still the golden sense of inferiority glitters above that other gold. Widowed? But it is so well with him! Does she think with sorrow of the long unbroken obedience of her life? Not when she looks into the mirror and sees not one line of care upon her youthful brow. Does she regret, perchance, that she has never known the worldly pleasures of dancing, Sunday travelling and the like? Not when she glances around her and sees relatives, friends and even chance acquaintances all brought to the cross; rich, but counting themselves only as stewards; and the old secular conversation exchanged for merry discourses on "the claims of Home and Foreign Missions, the perils threatening their country from illiteracy, anarchy, heathenism, Mormonism, Popery, Infidelity &c. — anxious first of all for the advancement of God's kingdom and secondly for the welfare and prosperity of the dear land of their birth, the glorious old Union transmitted to us by our revolutionary fathers"! The worldly Dixie is no more.

## VI

And Martha Finley? She has told us, with appropriate texts, all that we need to know of God. But what of her? There is the long labor of her lifetime to attest her fundamental doctrines and her emotional complexes. Her teachings are plain. To both the earthly and the heavenly fathers, immediate, cheerful, implicit, unquestioning obedience. A woman craves a master. But much as Elsie loved dear papa, did a few softer dreams hover about the figure of Mr. Travilla? Still we hear his sweet whisper: "Marry me, my darling, and you shall do as you please for the rest of your life". Still

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his "brute" rings in our ears. Once or twice, before Elsie was yet perfect, a shadow of rebellion swelled her gentle breast. Did it never heave also the womanly, Christian bosom of Martha Finley? Seemingly not. And yet . . .

There are two occasions: slight, yet yielding a wealth of subtle suggestion to the keen insight of the biographer. We remember that moment when a friend, congratulating Elsie upon the noble partner of her choice, let fall the murmur: "A man should be considerably older than his wife, that she may find it easier to look up to him". And there may have been just a tinge of vicarious tartness in the post-marital speech of Mr. Travilla when, refusing gallantly to avail himself of his privilege to command, he said: "I sometimes think, my darling, that you have had enough of obeying to last you the rest of your life".

The rest is silence.

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# MAN ABOUT TOWN

## By Ernest Boyd

HIS town, of course, is New York, but he was not born there, and none will ever know from what place he started, or how he reached Manhattan. His own account of the matter is unconvincing and has even aroused the suspicion that he is as English as his name. One prefers to believe that he sprang up mysteriously in the city itself in order to fulfil its need for a personality epitomising the virtues and vices of New York. To discover that the facts concerning him in "Who's Who" are true would be as disconcerting as to ascertain his age, which remains permanently and appropriately about forty-five. His retentive memory and omnivorous experience of people and events betray a knowledge incompatible with this official chronology. But that merely adds to the charm of this contemporary Dorian Gray.

No sinister connotations are intended by that allusion, for whenever he dies — he will die at a party — the portrait of the real man will reveal the benign and almost cherub-like features of a good father and a good friend. Once, in a moment of inadvertence, he seems to have plunged into that domesticity for which his kindly and hospitable nature may have intended him, but he soon realized that the married state was thwarting his manifest destiny. He could never be even a relatively good husband and at the same time embody the ideal of the Man About Town. But he bears with him some subtle mark of his previous condition which defines him as a different species from the authentic celibate.

His manner of existence is regular and well-ordered in its disorder, yet nothing could conceivably be further removed from the state of blessed domestication. His apartment is not by any means that of a typical bachelor. There has always been about it the specious air of home which is supposed to reveal the touch of a woman, a wife, as distinct from a paid housekeeper. He has no housekeeper, and within his walls woman in her time has played many parts, but never that associated with the hand that rocks the cradle. His world is ruled by other hands. It is he himself who preserves those evidences of domestic neatness which are so surprising in that man-made world of his — for he is his own housekeeper. His new chintzes and cretonnes, his well stocked ice-box are as much the fruits of his own endeavors as his assortment of liquors and pornography.

Not that pornography looms unduly large in his library. The latter, it so happens, is probably the last remaining example of a collection of books which "no gentleman's library should be without". The walls are lined with handsome and dignified tomes, mostly bearing English imprints, and restricted to the more serious branches of literature. Batik bindings and popular fiction find no place here, but rather the solemn and decorous volumes which are standard works in the fields of history, biography, folk-lore and *belles lettres*. Many an honest chorus girl, fresh from her reading of Gertrude Stein and James Joyce (and Michael Arlen), has been stunned by this imposing parade of scholarly taste, this array of books which the well dressed man is not reading. Before she recovers, the worst has happened: she has surrendered to the multiple talents of the Man About Town.

It has never yet been decided whether his recipes for drinks are more numerous than his unparalleled list of telephone numbers, all of them good, each in its — or rather her — own way. His cocktail glasses are beakers, and by their effects ye shall know them. Their contents are chosen to suit the company and the nature of the entertainment anticipated. Débutantes and ladies of the evening, accompanied by unattached or semi-detached males, can be accommodated, both as to strength and capacity, as easily as more conventional callers. The Man About Town



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has a chameleon-like ability to adapt himself to his environment. That ability, in fact, is the secret of his urbane existence. Fingering the heavy black ribbon of his eye-glasses he can engage the attention of a dowager, or a visiting English novelist, with the same interested ease as he will toy with the tangled curls of a wind-blown bob, or indulge in the most libidinous of innuendoes with such females, irrespective of their actual status, as delight in bawdry. His success with the feminine intelligentsia is explicable on this ground, for they are not deceived by the impressive appearance of his library. Each stratum of his incongruous circle of friends and acquaintances finds in the Man About Town the person desired. He can as readily supply the date of the first edition of Lecky's "History of European Morals" as give one a card to each of the five thousand speakeasies between Fortieth and Fifty-ninth Streets on both sides of the Avenue.

Wives who have divorced, or are about to do so, know him as their kindest friend and least severe critic. The destruction of marital unions, whether sanctified or not, is something of an obsession with him. He is genuinely perturbed by the contemplation of prolonged conjugal bliss. He doubts its existence; his attitude is one of Pirandellian scepticism: right you are, if you think you are — but he thinks you are not. He knows that marriage is the negation of all that makes his life charming, and he gladly facilitates proceedings which may add another woman to his telephone list or another man to the potential Men About Town. In summer, when New York is emptied of wives, he is in great demand by disconsolate husbands who are sure in his company of finding surcease from the void of an empty hearth. During July and August he puts on an annex to his list of telephone numbers. Hurrying forth eagerly from the side entrances of fashionable dress-making establishments at six, or from stage-doors at eleven-thirty, his cohorts of beauty forget their modeling and their histrionics in the joy of one of his reunions. When they commute on Saturday, the husbands smile reminiscently as they pour uncut Scotch into club-car tumblers. They agree that the Man About Town is a damned good sport — and the girls were not so bad either.

Despite his best endeavors, however, he does not succeed in creating other Men About Town in his own image. His life is a dream and a nightmare. None can hope to emulate him. He is the only person in the world who will answer the telephone at five o'clock in the morning as if that were the most natural hour at which to call up. He never spends an evening at home alone nor retires until long after the cabarets are politely supposed to be shut. He sleeps until noon the deep slumber of what in any other would be described as innocence, but in his case must be ascribed to less natural causes. Yet, on awaking, his head is clear, and a pink glow suffuses his chubby cheeks when he emerges from the shower. Even if he has slept on somebody's sofa by the wayside, a little cold water to his face and a cup of coffee by way of breakfast will send him off to his office looking more hale and hearty than many a suburbanite of exemplary habits.

It is part of the paradox of the Man About Town that he has an office and is in attendance there between the irregular hours of noon till half past five. It is, of course, an office not like unto any other known by that name. Ascending the winding staircase in a brownstone house one first encounters vistas of silken knees and soon beholds a waiting room filled with fair creatures, equipped with platinum Dunhill lighters, elongated cigarette tubes, and lolling in attitudes of various expectation. Some may have business with a partner in the firm which would explain their presence and appearance, but others are social or literary visitors for the Man About Town. Literature, it so happens, is his pastime, the recreation which he reserves for himself between lunch and cocktail time. The literary aspirant, if a neophyte, is likely to be surprised by the interruptions which punctuate the discussion of a manuscript. Every three minutes the telephone rings:

"Hello, darling! What happened to *you* last night? Don't you love me any more?"

"Hello, sweetheart! You *are?* How did that happen? You should be more careful."

"Hello! Well, where have you been?

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When's your wife coming back? Let's have a party soon. I hear you are living in a state of sin. I'll be in tonight around twelve. Drop in. What? Of course you may bring her. Good-bye."

"Oh, is that you, John? What about that gin? One case for the office and one for my apartment. Bring along an I.O.U. and I'll sign it."

Meanwhile the number of social callers has increased downstairs. The hour of five is approaching. Sounds of revelry are heard in the partner's room. Evidently a visiting intellectual is being entertained with the assistance of the silk-kneed creatures aforesaid. The Man About Town dismisses the last literary aspirant and collects from the waiting-room the makings of the evening's party, which may as well begin right there with a few cocktails. Office boys depart in search of oranges; bootleggers deliver their goods; erring wives cling to their paramours; an eminent philosopher is lost beneath the far from onerous burden of a froward young blonde of good family and bad habits; couples begin to coagulate; with the help of the telephone list first aids are summoned, and soon the groaning of taxicab brakes and the tap of high heels on the stairs reassure those who are without partners. Then the scene grows animated. The Man About Town is one vast genial smile. His indefatigable arms manipulate the shaker and his fertile brain devises new mixtures. If there is a momentary lull in the hubbub, the click of typewriters can be heard outside. The office is still at work. Literary life must go on.

Paternally, but with much outward demonstration of passion, he enfolds the ladies in his arms, his eyes beaming joy at their forwardness, his words promising facilities and understanding for all their frailties, actual and potential. With the air of one suggesting a novelty he says: "Come on! Let's go round to my place and drink a cocktail". By this time the helots have departed; down the stairs of the empty office there is soon a clattering of slightly uncertain footsteps, and the silent rooms echo the gurgles of laughter and the cries of animated voices. One young woman, tall and slim, stands on the edge of the sidewalk, extends a slender leg to a horizontal position, and thus attracts the attention of the necessary taxi-drivers. The Man About Town is about to come into his own.

On arriving at his apartment, the seasoned *habitués* assist in the making of stronger and better drinks, or inspect the latest additions to the photographs of fair women, or make facetious comments on the contents of the bedrooms. The newcomers are overpowered and, at first, slightly dismayed by the solemn array of the library. But a few potions of the host's applejack allay their fears. Soon they wander off and discover the peculiar properties of an apartment whose exits and spare rooms seem to have been designed after the sets for some bedroom farce. One music lover tries to synchronize on the pianola with a record of "I Can be Happy" which someone has put on the victrola for dancing purposes. Eventually this never quite successful effort is abandoned while, with hoarse intensity and almost professional vigor, a child of the jazz age sings and dances "Black Bottom".

As nine o'clock approaches those destined to pass out have already done so, and are lying in happy oblivion, while those who do not wish to do so begin to think of dinner. Just another shakerfull is necessary before the Man About Town can bring himself to consider the question. Finally, after various suggestions have been rejected, because of deficiencies in the service or of indebtedness on the part of certain persons present, the company sets forth for one of those heavily curtained doors in the West Forties whose heavy hangings, lack of ventilation, and tolerable alcoholic resources have endeared it to connoisseurs. When everyone is seated, he proceeds to play his predestined part of host, for the Man About Town is one of those people to whom head waiters are instinctively polite, and who always take charge of the ordering and receive the check. Max Beerbohm divided mankind into those who are either good hosts or good guests. The Man About Town is both, but, whatever his actual rôle, in public places he is always assumed to be the host.

It is a part of which he is proud and which he takes with the seriousness of a gastronomic

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virtuoso. With what airs of Brillat-Savarin he will scan some only too familiar menu, ordering the dishes which have so often been served before as though a *gourmet* were devising the most *recherché* meal. When there is a real opportunity for the display of his talents and he has, by any chance, set out to dine at a normal hour, he can draw cunningly upon the resources of the Colony, or conjure up a dinner no less worthy, if less costly, at the Meadowbrook. But even where no hope of culinary subtleties is possible, the Man About Town cannot order a meal without employing all the technique of the gastronomer. If, as often happens, his dinner hour has somehow drifted on until after midnight, he cannot even then resign himself to sandwiches or makeshifts. He must have his meals irregularly. He carries his faith so far as to debate earnestly whether a Burgundy (from Minetta Street) or a Bordeaux (from New Jersey) is the best accompaniment to the eternal recurrence of roast chicken or scallopini of veal. At dessert one must, of course, have a glass of port (of undefined origin), and the melancholy demitasse attains to the dignity of coffee when he has surrounded it with bottles purporting to contain liqueurs.

At this point it is immaterial to the Man About Town whose residence is the next stopping place. Wherever it is, he will have to do a lot of telephoning, for he always has engagements from midnight on. At that hour these become, in his peculiar vocabulary, "little ideas", and they are ideas which are usually transformed into actions. They rarely fail to add their lustre to the gathering, and nobody ever seems to wonder how they manage to fill up their nights until summoned to add new blood to the party. Their devotion to the Man About Town is personal, but if there have been any mismatings, now rendered acute through alcoholic excitement or sleepiness, they are prepared in the friendliest way to carry on. The Man About Town sets an example of the utmost impartiality in this respect by professing, — and where possible demonstrating, — the tenderest and most passionate regard for every woman who will listen to him. And they all do — perhaps because of the element of risk implied by his loudly reiterated desire to be the father of their child.

When nature finally takes its course, and love or sleep claims the majority, the Man About Town gathers the remnant around him and emerges into the night in search of scrambled eggs. At Reuben's, or preferably Child's, this simple dish leaves him like a giant refreshed and, if he has not already caught the eye of several female acquaintances, as likely as not he will acquire the fair companion of some too drowsy cavalier. It will be her privilege, if she so wills it, to return to his now deserted apartment. When she, by the exercise of her arts, has induced in him the fitting mood, she will try, if experienced, to obtain in advance some tangible evidence of his esteem and affection. It is suavely but firmly refused, in so genial a manner, indeed, that the unwary have been known to tarry, only to discover in the cold light of dawn that a taxi fare to Brooklyn or Canarsie is the most to be expected. With a counterclaim for services rendered, the Man About Town turns over on his not too virtuous couch and sleeps until noon sees for him the beginning of another day.

In the afternoon he is at his office, fresh, smiling, and rubicund, intent upon what he regards as his day's work. The delighted victims of his hospitality may still be struggling back to life with the aid of bromo seltzer and aspirin. He is at his post. The phone is ringing.

"Hello, darling! I haven't seen you for weeks. When are we going to have a party?"

"Hello! Yes? Hel-l-lo!! How do *you* feel today? You do? That's too bad. It couldn't have been the liquor. You'll have to be more careful, dear."

"Yes? Hello, dearest! You are going to dine with me. What? Of course, bring her along. I'll get another man. We'll collect a few people and have a little party later. I'll be round at your place in half an hour or so."

Then he turns to the consideration of a new, unexpurgated edition of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire".

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# THE LITERARY AWAKENING IN THE SOUTH

By Herschel Brickell

A CASUAL glance at the recent literary output of the United States discloses immediately the fact that H. L. Mencken's "Sahara of the Bozart", the South, has suddenly burst into colorful bloom. If the stinging Menckenian phrase was ever deserved, it is no longer. The dreary desert has become an oasis, at the moment the center of literary interest in this country.

Only a few years ago all eyes were on the Middle West, but the movement which centered in Chicago and produced a number of poets as well as realistic novelists has passed on. So suddenly has the South taken the spotlight that not many readers realize how much good writing has come out of a section which was scorned by the Corn Belt literati in the hey-day of their glory.

Just what causes are behind the present flowering of Southern talent it is not easy to discover. The industrial revolution of the last few years has broken up old patterns of life, bringing a shifting of values; much new blood has come into the section, especially in the cities, introducing a needed leaven of liberalism; dozens of Southerners of the oldest stock have taken to wandering up and down the earth with the rest of America; there has been a change in the general attitude toward the Negro because of his exodus to northern and western industrial centres.

When one sets out to link these social and economic causes directly to recent literary production, the task grows very complicated. It would be relatively simple if the present output of writing were readily classifiable as to material and method. But what gives it such keen interest is its extreme diversity — the fact that there are no "schools" and no group such as had its headquarters in Chicago in the old days.

Except that there is to be found a fresh vitality in the best writing that comes out of the South today, its books defy classification. The range in style is from the sound, solid prose of James Boyd to the mannered, at times, difficult, and very sophisticated prose of Frances Newman; the subject matter runs from Negro life on remote plantations to the pure fantasy of such stories as Donald Corley's.

The "Southern" writers in this article are Southern by right of nativity. Edith Wharton in a recent number of the Yale Review took American critics severely — and unjustly — to task for their reputed insistence that American novelists must confine themselves to the American scene; must never stray from their own front or back yards, with the preference for the latter, if it be sufficiently dull and disagreeable.

I am in full agreement with Mrs. Wharton that the world belongs to the novelist, and if a Southerner can write convincingly and movingly and beautifully of life in Zamboanga, Indo-China, Paris, Moscow or Lhasa, more power to his typewriter. Many of the writers whose work I shall discuss are delightfully cosmopolitan. There are exotic flowers in the desert which became a garden.

For instance, William Faulkner of Mississippi, the author of "Soldier's Pay" and "Mosquitoes" knows as much about how to write the prose to which we give the convenient tag "modern" as any habitué of the corner made by the crossing of the Boulevards Montparnasse and Raspail in Paris; Harry Hervey of Texas left home very young to range up and down the Orient and to catch its charm in a prose that drips color; Emanie Sachs grew up in Kentucky and after marrying a New Yorker embarked upon her remarkable chronicle of a wealthy Jewish family embodied in her two novels, "Talk" and "Red Damask".

Elizabeth Cobb Chapman, daughter of that good Kentuckian, Irvin Cobb, wrote her excellent first novel, "Falling Leaves", which is about a small-town Southern girl and a New York suburb, in an ancient —



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and leaky — Florentine monastery; Conrad Aiken, who made a reputation as a poet, then added another reputation as a writer of strange short-stories, and has just now done an interesting Joycean novel, left Georgia early and spends most of his time in England; John Gould Fletcher, whose ancestral home in Little Rock, Arkansas, is as perfectly Southern as a magnolia tree, married an Englishwoman and lives in London. And so it goes.

It does not seem to me any exaggeration to speak of a Renaissance of literature in the South. It is my confident belief that the last five years have seen the beginning and the flowering of the most varied and most interesting literary movement there since the fine old ante-bellum civilization came into blossom in the middle of the last century, leaving behind it a fragrance that lingers as pleasantly in the memory as the mingled bouquet of an old-fashioned garden.

In the present movement there is little left of this old romantic, sentimental flavor. Romance has not given away at a stroke to naturalism or realism, but there is evident an intelligent facing of facts. Where such traditional subjects as the Negro race are concerned, a deeper and more fundamental honesty is apparent. Of the familiar old comic-character aspect, little remains except such standardized, unreal black-face farces as the stories of Octavus Roy Cohen.

The element of beauty in style plays an important part in much of the writing of today, and I suspect that one explanation for this lies in the fact that so many of the better novelists are also poets. This is true in the case of Du Bose Heyward, for example, and Elizabeth Madox Roberts, and Stark Young, and Olive Tilford Dargan and Henry Bellaman, to mention only a few names chosen at random.

But any attempt to generalize about this desert turned oasis is fraught with difficulties and dangers. It is easier, and perhaps more convincing, to produce the evidence in detail which seems to me to point so clearly to the South's present supremacy.

It is safe to say that no other novel of last year was so well reviewed as Elizabeth Madox Roberts' "The Time of Man", a memorable story of Southern mountain folk, done with a fine blend of understanding, power and beauty; Miss Roberts is a Kentuckian.

Certainly few if any novels of this year have enjoyed the unanimously favorable press that Julia Peterkin's "Black April" won for itself last spring; Mrs. Peterkin is a South Carolinian. Her novel was no surprise to those of us who knew the earlier volume of short stories, "Green Thursday", but it established her at once as one of our most considerable makers of fiction. At the same time the book was a milestone in Southern letters because of the deeply sympathetic understanding she displayed in her treatment of Negro life on a remote Carolina plantation.

It has not been very long since another South Carolinian, who had already established a reputation as a poet, turned to fiction; Du Bose Heyward's "Porgy" was the result, a beautiful and stirring book whose Negro characters were observed with understanding, and set down with great skill. It would be hard to match in current fiction the passage in "Porgy" descriptive of the hurricane. Mr. Heyward followed "Porgy" with "Angel", a story of mountain whites hardly so good as the first book, but with the same aristocratic style. He has a third about finished, which I hear is even better than his first.

James Boyd, a North Carolinian, wrote one of the best historical novels of this generation in "Drums", a carefully wrought picture from a refreshingly original viewpoint of his native state in Revolutionary days. "Drums" won both popularity and highest praise from the critics. Mr. Boyd followed it with "Marching On", the story of a private in the Confederate army who belonged to the Fraser family of "Drums". Here he drifted dangerously near the old Southern romance of tradition, with a sprigged-muslin heroine, and a typical Colonel as her father.

But whatever its faults, it found an immediate audience. And it exhibited the same sterling qualities that made "Drums" so solidly, sturdily agreeable. "Drums" is a good deal of a model of the way historical

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novels should be written, and Mr. Boyd is just beginning his career.

Not many years ago a young Georgian, then hardly unknown to fame outside her own state, produced a volume of criticism of the short-story called "The Short Story's Mutations", and proved herself an unusual stylist and a daring critic. This book she followed, having won an O. Henry short story prize with her first short story, with a novel which turned a cruel, white light on social and family life in Atlanta, and revealed a young girl's inner thoughts and feelings with a frankness that left some readers gasping.

I mean, of course, Frances Newman, and "The Hard-Boiled Virgin" which, for all the difficulties of its style, sold well. Miss Newman has a hard, keen mind, which she uses as pitilessly as a surgeon his scalpel. She adores Henry James and is therefore, I suppose, immune to suggestions that her peculiar style is not as clear as spring water and as direct as arrow flight.

This spring another young Georgian burst as suddenly upon the reading public with a most curious novel, which was promptly hailed in most quarters — Miss Newman, incidentally, entering a demurrer to the consensus of critical opinion and calling it one of the worst novels she had ever read — as the outstanding first-novel of the season. Eleanor Carroll Chilton's "Shadows Waiting", with its finely wrought style, its unusual love story, its skilfully achieved atmosphere of aloofness from every-day realities, its delicate use of materials mined from the subconscious, was a novel of genuine distinction, and a promise as well.

It is interesting to note here, before proceeding to further examination of the evidences of a Renaissance, that without exception the writers I have mentioned are at the outset of their careers, so that the oasis is not likely to dry up and become a Menckenian Sahara at any time soon.

On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that the Renaissance is only beginning. There are candidates in abundance for the places that will be left vacant when the older classical writers have moved on. Many of these latter are by no means hoary-headed ancients and some are actually younger in point of years than certain of the newer writers, but I am thinking of the writers whose places in American literary history are securely established.

James Branch Cabell heads the list, and a half dozen other names leap at once to one's mind, Ellen Glasgow, Mary Johnston, and others who were carrying on a splendid tradition even while Mencken was seeing nothing but arid desert sands to the south of Baltimore.

This year's Pulitzer prize in drama went to Paul Green of North Carolina for his play of negro life, "In Abraham's Bosom"; it was only a few years ago that Hatcher Hughes, another North Carolinian, won a similar award with "Hell-Bent-Fer-Heaven". Paul Green is an outstanding example of the enlightened Southerner's attitude toward the Negro, both in its social implications and in the use of the black man's life-stuff as material for art.

Lulu Vollmer is a third North Carolinian to achieve distinction in the writing of plays about the mountaineers of her own state, and the New York theater is a good deal poorer just now because it lacks such studies in *genre* as her "Sun-Up" and "The Shame Woman".

To return to the main consideration of this article, however, which is the South's present output of fiction. That the lure of the infinitely rich historical period which James Boyd brought to life in "Drums" should continue its attraction for young Southerners is not at all surprising.

Two other recent novels treat of the Civil War. Morris Markey's "The Band Plays Dixie" is a story off the beaten path and well enough written to make this young Virginian's career worth watching. James Stuart Montgomery's "Tall Men" tells a romantic, swinging tale of blockade running from the English viewpoint, and the Literary Guild honored this Georgian's first novel by selecting it as their July book this year. Mr. Markey's "That's New York" is one of the best of recent books about the city; he, like dozens of other Southerners, makes his home in Babylon.

Stark Young, after years of devotion to

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poetry, the essay, and the drama, produced a first novel last year called "Heaven Trees", a story of his own country, North Mississippi, in 1850, to the telling of which he brought a style of great charm and finish, a keen sense of humor, and a fine understanding of a fascinating period. In a sense the book was not much more than a series of loosely linked episodes and character sketches, but it would be a bold person indeed in this day who would deny it the title of novel: just now anything that is not very definitely something else is a novel. Mr. Young has a second novel in preparation and expects to devote most of his time in the future to fiction.

Evelyn Scott, after writing several unusual and exotic books, largely autobiographical, in a highly individual, often strikingly effective style, returned to her native Tennessee with "Migrations", which started a trilogy of historical stories of the state of civilization in ante-bellum Tennessee and the dispersal of its pioneer population. "Migrations" suffered from a sense of incompleteness because it was only a part of a large canvas, but it had some stirring writing, and easily earned a place among the distinctive recent achievements of Southern writers.

This list runs on almost without end, so let us pause for a moment to glance at another interesting phase of the current literary revival in the South. I refer to the splendid work of Southerners in the preservation of the riches of Negro folk-lore and folk-music. This is not new, to be sure, but the tradition established so firmly by Joel Chandler Harris and carried on by such writers as Ambrose E. Gonzales of South Carolina is still being honorably upheld.

The work of Howard W. Odum and Guy B. Johnson at the University of North Carolina — incidentally, one of the most active social and cultural centers in the country at the moment — is splendid. R. Emmet Kennedy of Louisiana, poet, and author of first-rate Negro stories, made one of the finest of all the collections of spirituals in his "Mellows"; Dorothy Scarborough of Texas, and Columbia University, has published a rich volume of Negro folk-songs; Newbell Niles Puckett of Mississippi a volume of folk-beliefs of great interest and value. Mr. Kennedy's most important prose work is "Gritny People", to be published this fall. T. S. Stribling of Tennessee was one of the pioneers of this literary revival, this blossoming of the oasis. His "Birthright" was more than a good novel of life in a Southern village, with the inevitable contacts between the races; it, together with another piece of fiction which happened to come the same season, H. A. Shands's "White and Black", showed that the Southern white man could view the race "problem" — silly word — objectively.

This indicated a changing viewpoint, although, of course, there have always been Southerners who have kept their sanity in that direction. And the reception of the two books, especially the first — Mr. Shands' novel was in some respects a better book, although not so well written as "Birthright" and not so successful in catching the popular fancy — indicated a changing attitude on the part of the South itself which was an earnest of its acceptance, if at times with reluctance, of other and later books on the same general subject.

Mr. Stribling turned to Central America after "Birthright" and produced two excellent novels of that scene, "Fombombo", a highly diverting satire of the American commercial spirit in contrast to the Latin soul, and "Red Sand", a colorful romance of bull-fighting. "Teeftallow" brought him back to his own South. Whether he remains there in future, or goes wandering again, he has a good deal to say, and great skill in saying it.

There are many other names to be cited, even if one cannot hope to mention them all. One turns to Texas and finds that Barry Benefield of "The Chicken-Wagon Family" and many admirable short stories, began life there, although he now lives in the East. His new novel, "Bugles in the Night", just now out, is an advance over his first. Chester Crowell, one of the best-known and most severe of the numerous critics of present-day civilization in America, and also a first-rate short story writer, is a Texan.

Dorothy Scarborough, whose career as a novelist began with "In the Land of Cotton", a story of farm life in Texas, continued the tale of her native state in the anonymous

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"Wind", and a third novel, "Impatient Griselda" is on the current lists. I have already mentioned Miss Scarborough's work in connection with the collection of negro folk-song.

Royal Dixon, author of unusual nature stories — the personality of plants and animals — is a Texan. So are J. Frank Davis, who wrote "The Ladder", among other plays; Ruth Cross, the novelist; and Hyder E. Rollins, one of the leading living authorities on ballad literature.

South Carolina boasts two of the most delightful nature-writers living in Archibald Rutledge and Herbert Ravenel Sass, both of whom know the wild life of their native state as well as a New Yorker knows his apartment, and who write with real beauty. Elliott Springs, who edited the diary of another Southern war-flyer, "War Birds", has also done a number of short stories of the life of an aviator.

Philips Russell, the author of "Benjamin Franklin, The First Civilized American", one of the most popular of recent biographies, is a North Carolinian. W. E. Woodward, leader of the biographical debunkers, is a Georgian, and is just now at work on a study of Grant.

Thyra Samter Winslow, who is generally recognized as one of the best of present-day short story writers, and who has had the unusual honor of seeing a collected volume of her tales on best-seller lists, is from Arkansas. Charles J. Finger, editor of All's Well, holds forth at Fayetteville, in that state, and has helped many young writers of the neighborhood.

I have mentioned Mrs. Roberts' excellent use of the Southern mountain scene in "The Time of Man". The work of Lucy Furman and Olive Tilford Dargan in the same general region is also of interest.

Ada Jack Carver of Louisiana has made a name for herself with her stories of Acadian life. By the time this article is printed, Lyle Saxon, another Louisianian, will have out a history of the Mississippi river, with a first-hand account of this year's epochal flood as part of what promises to be an important contribution to this branch of history.

Most readers are familiar in outline at least with the remarkable success of another brilliant young Georgian whose name deserves a prominent place in any survey like the present one. The rise of Laurence Stallings from an ex-marine crock of the war to success as book-reviewer, novelist, and playwright is romantic in the extreme, and gives zest to speculation as to what direction this forceful talent will take in the future.

Isa Glenn is another Georgian whose work to date is admirable. Miss Glenn's two novels, "Heat" and "Little Pitchers", are both set in the tropics, where she spent years as the wife of an army officer. She writes with considerable technical skill and a sharp sense of the dramatic, as well as an unusual ability to create atmosphere and make her readers feel it.

Jack Bethea is an Alabama newspaper man who has written movingly of the evils of the convict lease system in his state. His novels are pleas for social justice, and have not found extensive audiences thus far, but they have power and are interesting as protests against an evil system of long standing.

Richard Halliburton, author of two highly popular books of travel and adventure, "The Royal Road to Romance" and "The Glorious Adventure", is a Tennesseean.

Donald Corley is another Georgian who is in the public eye at the moment because of a volume of unusual short stories, for which Mr. Cabell wrote the introduction. Mr. Corley is credited by Mr. Cabell with the possession of the fairy gift of story teller's magic. His are romantic stories, laid in various countries of his own imagining, fantastic stories, often rarely lovely in style and plot.

I have not attempted to include in this article all the evidence of the South's current interest in literature as it is manifested in the recent rejuvenation of such scholarly magazines as the University of Virginia Quarterly, or in the careers of such purely literary magazines as The Reviewer of Richmond, of happy memory.

Of the old Reviewer group, Emily Clark has just had published an alluring volume of Richmond sketches, "Stuffed Peacocks". Frances Newman's "The Hard-Boiled

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Virgin" appeared in part in this magazine, which also published Mrs. Peterkin's early pieces. Hunter Stagg, also associated with the Reviewer, is still doing excellent critical work in Richmond.

A new novelist from Virginia is James Rutherford Franklin, author of "In the Path of the Storm", another story of mountain life in which definite promise is disclosed. Polan Banks, still another Virginian, who wrote one entertaining novel about that eminent old Louisianian, Jean Lafitte, has not been heard from since going to Hollywood.

Henry Bellaman is a Missourian who has lived and worked in South Carolina, until, like Hervey Allen, who is a Pennsylvanian, he is usually accepted as a Southerner. Mr. Bellaman is first of all a poet, but he has done excellently well with the novel, and is a sound critic. If Missouri is permitted within the scope of this article, Murray Sheehan, author of the satirical life of a centaur in a Missouri village, "Half-Gods", and Cyril Kay-Scott, whose two unusual studies in objective realism, "Blind Mice" and "Sindbad", should be mentioned. The latter is credited with one of the finest portraits of a Southern belle in recent literature.

I have given less attention to poets perhaps than they deserve, but the South has never lacked for poets. It has produced only one Lanier, it is true, but there have always been those who made inspired verses in Lanier's country. One names offhand John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, William Alexander Percy, Muna Lee, Adrian Schwartz, Lucile Rutland, and John McClure to show that the Renaissance does not lack its singers.

One unmistakable evidence of reader-interest in literature in the South is the number of literary departments established by Southern newspapers within the last few years. A decade ago a few of the older dailies paid some slight attention to news about books and published desultory critical articles. Now a "book page" or a "book column" has become a standard department everywhere.

The quality of the reviewing that goes into these pages is considerably higher than one might expect, and their editors are generally as free from provincialism of viewpoint as the authors I have mentioned.

I believe I have cited sufficient evidence to sustain the contention that if Mr. Mencken will look out of a window toward the South again he will not see the dreary desert that once shocked him into his biting characterization. I have not ventured the hazardous statement that "great" literature is being written in the South, as my standards are those of contemporary American production.

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# LOVE

## By Emily A. Smith

WE left our horses and walked up the path to the top of the mountain. I looked back to see my bay lay flat her ears as the white horse brushed her neck in his effort to reach leaves above her head. I watched long enough for the leaves to twist in his mouth and disappear and the ears of the mare to resume a peaceful angle. The shadows of the night, blue in the light of the rising sun, still clung to the morning like a caul on the face of a new-born child. And like that veil those shadows seemed to pulsate, to move delicately with the beating of new life beneath it, so lightly that one looked closely to see. Our feet left rude blurs in the dew-covered grass, silvered, green, thick. Spider-webs loaded with water stretched from a post to a bar, each strand of thread outlined in dew beads or enclosing in exquisite nets, like fine morning caps, clumps of bushes. The sky was like a great blue bubble, flung high in the air and filled with golden mist. The path, like a forever whimsical mind, wiggled laboriously up the incline, plunging into tree shade, out again into open spaces of rocks, bare, not yet warm, grass and sunlight, straight up on an impulse, and then bending almost back on itself. Larry ahead pushed aside overhanging limbs, hawthorn and briar. One slapped my face sharply, and I leaned against a small oak while Larry kissed and smoothed away the redness from my cheek and rubbed on dew with his finger tips and dried it with his handkerchief whose creases were until then unshaken, and which smelled like a man's top drawer.

A garter snake rustled, slithered across the path. We watched him gleam in the sunlight, the jade of his back, the smoothness of his scales. Out of my hatred for things that slide and creep on dull-colored bellies, I admired his short length, the sinuous twists and curves of his body, the poise of his head. He was not a snake, he was a jewel to be worn on a white arm or coiled about a throat against whose warm pulsing he might lay his head and play out his tongue, yellow and feathery.

We drank at a spring from which Larry pulled away ferns, crowding close, and moss and wet earth. The man stooped to cup in his hand water which ran through his fingers. I drank too, cupped my fingers and felt against my lips through the water the heat of my hand that had curled about the riding crop, lying beside me on the grass. Far down the path, a rabbit, sitting, dropped an ear and gazed at us. My eyes felt wide, loosened at the corners, as if sleep were gone forever and I could look and see and never drop my lids. The wind stirred the wet hair about Larry's face and then lifted my own and cooled the scalp and the back of my neck. I watched the man ahead as he swung in a long stride, varying little, and admired his shoulders and eyed the whiteness of the skin that slid from time to time from under his neck band as he quickened his movements. He told me that the ground could not be used for tillage on account of the stones, nor for pasture on account of the cliffs. "The nearest house," he said, "is that one we passed three miles back. Remember?" I remembered. "Are you afraid?" I shook my head and we both smiled.

Then the trees thinned, and ahead I saw the open space that was the top of the mountain. It seemed to be fitted for the top of any mountain, flat and bare so that an impression of even more height was given to the sheer drop of one thousand feet over which we looked. We could not doubt that this was the top. There was no gradual curve up, then a slow swell down again. It was abrupt and sudden and final. Stones squatted in the shadows of the line of trees, that spread a fan of shade across the twenty feet of open space, and grass, thick and firm,



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filled the places where the stones were not and lined the edge of the cliff as if to conceal the jaggedness of the broken rocks. I went straight to the edge and peered over into the space below me, up into the sky above. Behind the fan of trees the sun had escaped from the colored clouds that now lay close to the horizon like a heap of discarded garments, soft and soiled. The grass, here in the shadows of the rocks, was still beaded with dew except in the strips dried by sun rays which had found an inquisitive way through the tree leaves. The bowl into which we looked seemed lined with the tops of trees. A white frill of rock, just outside the trees, straight down the cliff wall, was the only indication of hardness about the curving, green surface of the valley bowl. A house on the other side of the valley, the only one in sight, thrust up a chimney through the trees, from which not yet the blue smoke of a farmer's breakfast rose. "It is early, isn't it?" Larry commented. I nodded. Night mists, beginning to stir from the nearness of the sun, and early morning noises of bird voices that seemed husky from the distance and sweet smells of wet wood corners and sassafras and pollen from a corn field, somewhere behind the farmhouse, drifted up from the valley and hung like a lid over the top. The blue of the sky had lightened with the rising of the sun. Five crows rose from the floor of the bowl, flapped easily across the opening and settled again on the other side.

I sat close to the rim. I wanted to swing my legs, but Larry objected that the turf might not be solid and my boots were heavy. The spurs struck the round stones and several clattered, rolled and went over. The peace of great height settled over me, the wind smoothed my skin like a cool hand. Larry pushed lazily with his foot a stone. We listened for its striking, but the sound was lost. We looked across tree tops, across thirty miles, at smoke stacks, thinned by distance to lead-pencil slenderness; at the river, lying like a coiled, silver ribbon. On that river a boat puffed up a funnel of white steam. We saw the steam and listened for seconds for the faint moo of the whistle that finally reached us, prolonged, mellowed, sweetened. Larry lay behind me. Listening closely, I heard the long, soft breaths that he drew. I felt his fingers stroke the pussy-willow silk of my shirt and roll it between the tips. The gentle tugging amused me and I turned to look down into his eyes, gray with peace and happiness, smiling up at me. There were brown flecks in their irises. His fingers curled and sheltered the flame of his match, waving around the end of a cigarette. I watched the fire, saw the glow of the tobacco as he sucked in air and smelled the smoke which spread around my head. Still lying, he swung his body around and over several feet, and propping his head against a rock, he blew smoke rings that collapsed and twisted in the air. I watched a few roll out over the bowl, still semblances of rings. The ashes clung to the cigarette, grew nearly as long as the unsmoked stub. He shook those ashes on the ground, held up the snubbed point to me, and still looking at me, with a thumb, flipped it towards the bowl. For some reason the white cylinder did not go over. I saw it lying on a clump of grass, smoke blue, thin, irritating, still curling up. I watched Larry push feebly with his foot at the clump, shake it with his toe, and hitch his long body closer to his task. I turned away to the river boat, the silver ribbon, the smoke stacks, the sun rays pulling aside veils of mist. Larry grunted softly behind me. Then he ejaculated, "God! Margaret!"

I twisted my head at the peculiar tone. The rock, the grass, the cigarette stub, Larry were sinking down. Stones rolled like scrambling rats and Larry's face, his mouth wrenched by horror and his eyes widened by fear, turned towards me. I heard echoes from the other side of the bowl that I realized dimly were the fragments of my own screams. I could not reach him. The space of ground was lowering like a platform on hinges and those hinges were thin grass roots that I heard crack with a dry, continuous sound and that I saw lengthen, break, curl. A hand seemed to plunge beneath my blouse and squeeze my heart until I seized my breast in pain and gasped for breath. I remembered the house three miles from the foot of the mountain and saw

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the still smokeless stick of a chimney on the other side of the bowl. Larry snatched at another clump of grass, wirier, tougher. I talked aloud to him and to God. The earth dropped and the man swung by that one hold, alone. I felt the spongey give of the ground as I ran and had to fling my body away from the bowl to keep from going with the rocks. Once I managed to touch his fingers, but I could not get close enough to grasp him. The whole cliff seemed to slide and move under my weight. It was not Larry's face now. The hair clung in thick black streaks to his wet skin, the brows were strained into peaks. I could not save him. I thought of the frill of rock below, wondered whether he would lose consciousness in the air — then I could stand the agony no longer, the twisted mouth, the suffering eyes. I sat flat on the ground, and kicking high, drove my spurs and heels into Larry's fingers. They disappeared and an extra chunk of earth dropped away too. More stones rattled over the edge.

Presently I was conscious of wind blowing against my scalp, of stones, sharp, jagged, cool, pressing my cheek, of the faint taste of blood, of the two horses, tied at the foot of the mountain. Then I knew that I had to get both horses home, with the empty saddle creaking and the stirrups flapping and the white horse's feet beating hard in the dust.

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# COMMERCIALISM IN THE SOUTHERN DENOMINATIONAL COLLEGE

## By Eudora Ramsay Richardson

1. Get your sales argument down pat before interviewing the first prospect.
2. Be sure to see your prospects.
3. Solicit only your own prospects.
4. Sell each prospect in keeping with his personal ability and interest in a community undertaking of vital importance to the future of his city.

YOU would guess, of course, that I am quoting from directions given to life insurance or real estate agents or to house-to-house canvassers for floor wax or electric refrigerators. As a matter of fact, these are the "pointers" for a "sales army" recruited to conquer a city and return with $750,000 booty for a denominational college. These Mexican troops, organized to fight according to approved methods of guerilla warfare, had their general, their colonel, majors, captains, lieutenants, and no privates within the ranks. Annual community fund drives had set the standard, cleared the underbrush, and left a neglected group of potential officers eager for the publicity which campaigns provide. The publisher of the afternoon paper had headed the last community fund drive; therefore the publisher of the rival morning paper was glad enough to demonstrate his interest in the city's welfare by accepting the commission of general. The colonel was logically found in the manager of a large department store that needed the patronage of a thousand grateful students and their friends. Many of the campaign letters went out on store stationery. The colonel's arduous labors — and they were arduous, and effective — might well be charged against the advertising item in his budget.

The campaign was a howling success. No Kiwanis club could have engineered noisier luncheons, cheerier dinners, or get-togethers of a merrier and more informal nature. Nowhere was there a taint of scholarship. The camaraderie was unmarred by the faintest hint of the academic. Letters, speakers, circulars screamed the slang of the streets; grammar and rhetoric were cast to the winds; vernacular of better business, the workers declared, was bringing education to the level of the people. Little was said of the university as a cultural center — and perhaps justly and rightly so. Here are some of the questions and answers in a famous yellow pamphlet that expounded the truth: —

1. Why should the business interests of R—— support the University?

Last year the University administration spent in R—— the sum of $500,000. The students, faculty and their families spent more than $750,000, or a total of more than $1,250,000. The present enlargement program which shall provide for 550 more students will mean that an additional half million will be spent annually with the business concerns of this city.

2. Why should the average R—— citizen support the University?

Because the University of R—— is one of R——'s biggest assets. The presence of this university adds materially to local property values, and is in large measure responsible for the high intellectual and cultural standards of the city.

3. What is the money for?

The money raised in the Centennial Campaign will be divided evenly — $1,000,000 for new buildings, to be constructed in R—— by R—— contractors, and $1,000,000 for endowment.

4. What is R——'s part?

R—— citizens are being asked to subscribe $750,000, which will be expended on the new building program.

Certainly the Chamber of Commerce could produce no more materialistic arguments than these. The fact is that the denominational colleges are taking account of only one need — and that is money. With money in their possession, all else will speed-



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ily be added unto them. This root of scholarship, and apparently of all good, is bought with honors and prestige and by the granting of absolution. The day has gone when the definition of a college as a great man on a soap box with a boy before him is accepted. Material values in education have supplanted all others. Ideas need not extend upward but buildings must. It matters little what type of professor is secured provided the right proportion of Ph.D.'s is maintained on the faculties. Few care whether the libraries are used so long as they contain the requisite number of books. Student bodies are judged by their football teams and the lung capacity of the rooters. Presidents need not be scholars, but they must be boosters. They must dress like men of the world, ride in expensive cars, mix with the boys at the Rotary Club, and not flinch when slapped on their backs and addressed by their first names. All these essentials of an up-to-date college require money, and money is a thing Americans part with for what they conceive to be value received.

So the colleges, bothering no more about scholarship, are perfecting the art of money-raising. Technique seems to have become universally adopted. The campaign involves an anniversary. The most desirable certainly is the centennial. Since even exceedingly ingenious colleges, however, can not contrive to be a hundred years old before needing money, many must content themselves with semi-centennials, quarter-centennials, or even anniversaries of a decade of alleged usefulness. There seems to be no limit to the number of important celebrations a college may have. It has become the thing now for the president to run his own campaigns, an arrangement compatible with the popular conception of presidential qualifications, if not always with the president's own ideals.

I hold in my hand now the program of another of these "academic, alumni, and denominational celebrations". From the advertising point of view it is the last word in efficiency, calculated to enlist all groups and to make everyone feel happy and important. The music, if somewhat crude, is evangelistic and emotional. The personnel of the speakers is such as to prove gratifying to alumni of many eras. The subjects in high-sounding euphemisms relate college to many phases of secular life. There are luncheons and banquets for the delegates, and, of course, an automobile ride engineered by the Rotary, Kiwanis, Civitan, and Lions Clubs of the city.

> Hark, hark, the dogs do bark!
> The beggars are coming to town!

What will be the upshot of it all? More enthusiasm for the college, of course! More money, certainly! Better education? What nonsense! Who cares anything about that?

As first aid to the campaigners, a system of judicious conferring of degrees has been evolved. Every degree these days seems to have its price. A hundred thousand dollars buys a good one; some can be bought for much less. At a little college in South Carolina recently a commencement that drew its audience from far and near was the occasion for conferring Doctor of Literature degrees upon several business men, one of them a cotton-mill president who probably doesn't know that Shakespeare wrote sonnets or that Bacon can't always be sliced. In one instance, when it seemed unwise for obvious reasons to confer a doctorate upon a hundred-thousand-dollar contributor, the degree was presented to the generous man's wife, a woman whose personal charm atones for her lack of a college education. Another college in the same state, a poor man's school that talks much about educating the country and small town pastor and the layman who will go home to lead the B. Y. P. U., found a few years ago a New York millionaire who had once been its student. Undisturbed by the discovery that Croesus had attended the college less than half a term and had had no subsequent education anywhere except in industry, the college brought its wealthy alumnus down to commencement, had him written up in the daily papers as the college's millionaire find, made him honor guest at the alumni banquet, and conferred upon him an M.A. degree. The nice part of the story, however, is that the grateful alumnus is said to have fallen so far short of expectations as

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to present his alma mater with a check for but $200. His degree, secured by neither study nor a large gift, is, I believe, the cheapest on record.

Money, moreover, is not the only advantage bought by degrees. A college must have its rooters. Doctor of Divinity degrees, it is commonly known, are distributed each year to ministers selected, not because of academic or theological accomplishments, but on the chance that they can bring students to the college and gifts from wealthy members of their congregations, as well. A leading Kiwanian in a Southern city was recently given an A.B. degree — in exchange presumably for his influence and other valuable, though not financial, considerations. While not a heavy-weight mentally, the young man is a champion booster — and ability to boost means more to that particular college than familiarity with historical events or the customs of the ancients.

A knack for boosting has even become a professorial requirement. Faculty members are discouraged from spending time in college libraries or in their own studies. Being a good fellow is far more important than being a student. A brilliant young man with a zeal for scholarship, which is fatally tied up with popular gifts, about four years ago accepted the chair of English at a Southern denominational college. He was fresh from two universities where he had been marked as a student certain to make his contribution to letters. His doctor's thesis just published was creating, contrary to precedent and expectations, quite a stir in and out of college circles. He loved teaching, he told me, but his life outside the class room would be consecrated to research. During the years of his professorship in the South he has brought forth nothing. It would be miraculous if he had. He teaches several hours each day, belongs to a number of local organizations, speaks at every gathering engineered by the Chamber of Commerce — from the annual banquet to the baseball jubilee, runs a daily column in the afternoon paper, addresses the junior congregation of the largest church in town each Sunday, speaks at least once a week before some woman's club, is sent all over the state to represent the college, and is constantly sought after by hostesses who want their dinner parties to be successful. He explains that he has let himself be diverted because he has been made to feel that the greatest service he can render the institution that employs him involves mixing with people. The man on the faculty better able than any other to lift the college's level of scholarship made to feel that he must serve in other ways! It is a sad commentary upon education in the South!

The evaluation of scholarship in a booming Southern town, where cotton mills and colleges share equally in the perpetual advertising campaigns, is mirrored by the attitude toward a man who twelve or more years ago earned $1500 as a professor and who now, by virtue of one of those tides that come occasionally in the affairs of men, is receiving as president of a cotton mill heaven knows how much. An alumnus of the college, writing in the magazine that devotes its columns to the great American miracle, summed up in a sketch of this pedagogue-manufacturer the popular estimate of scholarship when he glorified the genius that could lift in so short a time a man from lowly teaching to the lofty estate of manufacturing cotton cloth. There are only a few in the state who can see that the professor of 1913 was as useful, and withal as big a man, as the cotton magnate of today.

Immensely funny is the attitude of the rich toward their gifts. The uneducated man who has accumulated wealth wants some connection with a college for the prestige he imagines he will receive. He seems to feel also that money given to so-called Christian education will buy for his sins a sort of papal absolution. Or he may be purchasing earthly immortality by specifying that some part or all of the college to which he is giving be named for him. Everyone, of course, knows of the university that exchanged a name standing for the triune God for one connoting a well-known brand of tobacco. The great university, with its impressive buildings, its startling publicity, and its fearsome football team, is actually rising from the ashes of a billion cigarettes

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and the smoke of a million pipes, while it commemorates the name of a man whose youth was spent in pursuits scarcely academic.

With the increasing tendency to place business men on boards of trustees, there is no probability of commercialism and the college negotiating for a divorce in the near future. Education must meet the standards set up by business or fail utterly. A few of the trustees are college men, but there are no scholars on the boards, practically none who care a rap about education *per se*. The boards reflect somewhat — with delightful exceptions of course — the attitude of the business men of the towns who view the college merely as a commercial asset, of the chamber of commerce that sees the advertising which a seat of learning brings to the community, and of the merchants to whom students are potential purchasers. Local advertising has been reduced to its last degree of absurdity in one state where a denomination's hundred year old college for women is being crippled by three rival institutions of the same faith and order, one established by a wealthy man for the purpose of boosting property values in his locality, another presented to the denomination by a town that claims to be the fastest growing city in the state, and another in almost the same section of the state sponsored by a village that will not be outdone by its neighbors. Out of such soil and with such constant fertilizing how can the best intentioned administrators produce a learning untainted by Rotarianism?

For a number of reasons, however, the women's colleges have themselves been singularly blameless. It is hoped that there will be for them some heavenly reward, for on earth they have had precious little. . . . A few, starving, destitute of habitat or clothing, have annexed themselves to the colleges for men and are trying to be content with the crumbs that fall from their brothers' tables. Others are still struggling alone, resisting a marriage arrangement that harks back to a day when the wife lost not only name but also property rights, personal liberty, and chance for development. Without intercollegiate athletics, fine buildings and highly paid publicity men on their faculties, most of the women's colleges are giving an education either denied the men or unassimilated by them.

Whatever may be said now concerning commercialism in the sectarian institutions, there can be no impugning the motives of those who founded the first colleges. Like Harvard, all were established to give to the churches an educated ministry; and, like Harvard, the best have been lost to the denominations that gave them birth. Since future ministers paid no tuition, it was necessary at once to admit students whose fees would add to the contributions from the churches. Almost at once those for whom the colleges were established were looked upon as of minor importance to those who paid their way. Young preachers, given opprobrious nicknames, became the butts of campus jokes. An aristocracy labelled with the dollar-mark was quickly grafted upon denominational education. Paradoxical it seems that the two denominations whose mass memberships not only aggregate more ignorance than that of all the others but which have as well the greatest amount of proportionate ignorance, should be the ones that have started the greatest number of institutions. The explanation of the paradox lies, however, in the fact that their educational program has proved to be a boomerang by which they have lost the best among their constituency. In a last effort to save their institutions the denominations now, knowing nothing of the requirements of scholarship, are blundering toward emulation of those advertising methods that swell a town's population and put over the annual community fund campaigns.

Mr. Babbitt sums it up in an editorial published immediately after the close of the campaign to which reference was made at the beginning of this article:

> "The recent local endowment campaign was productive of more than the considerable money total subscribed," writes the editor of the morning paper. "R—— has discovered the University of R——; its people know now, many of them for the first time, that it is the one institution to which the youth of the city can look for higher education at a cost within the reach of practically any purse.

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They realize now that it is far better to build upon the facilities of this institution . . . than to establish their own city college at a heavy expenditure in capital for building a plant and at a continuing expense for its upkeep — all to come out of the city treasury.

"To repeat, the city realizes this. But it has also definitely made itself heard in a demand that, if its support is to be given, the university must recognize its responsibility to the city. On the part of the Board of Trustees, it may properly be assumed that this demand is recognized, and in the main appreciated. The college has reached a clearly marked turning point in its career. If it is to continue to expand, it must . . . now . . . indicate its appreciation of its responsibility to the city and of the city's partnership in the enterprise.

"To accomplish this, there seems to be no better way than to expand the Board of Trustees so as to include men of *position* and proved worth of various creeds and a representation of various *business interests*. These men would bring to the college a fresh viewpoint and perhaps a more liberal interpretation of the university's responsibility to the city . . ."

In other words, the college must in no sense stand aloof from the city. It must recognize a partnership that involves dictation by those men of position, representatives of various business interests, who are working to increase the prosperity of the city. The money is raised, and the college becomes a cog in the wheels of commerce.

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# THE WISECRACK AND THE GAG

## By Walter Winchell

WHEN big time vaudeville was downtown or where Mr. Keith's Union Square Theater used to be in New York, no bill was complete without that pair who swapped this one: "If you had eleven apples and twelve horses how would you divide the apples evenly among the twelve horses?"

To which the "straight man" or the comedian's partner would respond: "I don't know, Ignatz. How would you evenly divide eleven apples among twelve horses?"

"Why you simply make applesauce!" was the answer and if the auditors didn't fall right out of their chairs at that joke then the next generation employed the tag line of the old reliable to squelch a braggart or an opinion with which they didn't concur.

So great an army of entertainers employed the applesauce gag that it became the butt for derisive comment. It was in a class with: "Who was that lady I seen you with yesterday?" or "Why does a chicken, etc." In 1925 A.D., a ham who had been laying off in front of the Palace Theater in New York for six months was offering an alibi to a group of flip talkers.

"So I says to my agent, the hell with them. Joe Zilch ain't in this business for the glory. No sir, he's in it for the dough, see? It ain't billing or what dressing room or what spot I get. It's how much money is there in it for little Joe and so when they make up their mind that I don't work for coffee and cake dough li'l Joe will go to work for them."

"Applesauce," said someone in the gathering and another wisecrack was born. The flapper incorporated it into her routine of sassy answers, the collegiate passed it along to his townsfellows via letters and even the small time and the big time players "laughed off" a joke that failed to receive warm response from audiences by twitting themselves with: "So we made applesauce!"

If anything makes the rounds of a community swifter than a rumor it is the "wisecrack". After it has been swapped by a few wags and the local telegrapher hears it and likes it, he gives it momentum by passing it along to the keyman at San Francisco, Keokuk, North Adams or Canarsie. Often the wisecrack becomes popular enough to make an entire "popular" song which is how "Yes We Have No Bananas!" sold more sheet music than any other ditty.

The creator of that line was T. A. Dorgan ("Tad") whose cartoons are famous. Tad employs it to this day in the corner of his sports pictures and it invariably is placed in the mouth of a mouse or a roach. Tad never received any recognition for the line from the song publishers who made several hundred thousands of dollars on the pattern. A pair of obscure songwriters took advantage of the popularity of the crack, fashioned a ridiculous lyric around it to which they added a melody that the Salvation Army is famous for and bang! Just like that — the greatest song hit ever known was registered.

From "Yes We Have No Bananas" was conceived "Banana Oil", another flip remark employed first by another cartoonist, Milt Gross, who fashioned a daily comic strip after the line. It, too, was employed chiefly to stifle a boaster or replace "That's the bunk!" but it never attained the fame necessary to be fashioned into a song, that is, this recorder doesn't recall such a number. "So's your old man!" — also used to crush a tale-teller — was born out of a smoking-car story.

A fare hailed a hansom cab on a London Street and instructed the driver to fetch him to the Bachelor's Club. Upon arrival the passenger's tip was small and the gay driver is supposed to have queried: "What club is this?"

"The Bachelor's Club," replied the fare, "why do you ask?"

"Are you a member of it?"



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"I am," answered the fare, "I am a bachelor."

"So's your old man!" said the driver as he looked at the tip and drove away. A popular song was never designed after the line which belongs to American slang, but a ditty called "So's Your Old Lady" came out of it.

It is an ageless theory that there are only seven original patterns for all the jokes in the world. This may be true but it is difficult to believe, for too many quips, puns, wisecracks and stories have been conceived out of situations. A concrete example is herewith set forth.

The scene was set in a New York night club. Percy Hammond, the dramatic critic, was disparaging a newly built Broadway moving picture theater when Harry Thaw passed the table.

"Speaking of that garrish looking dump," said Hammond, "reminds me that that guy Thaw killed the wrong architect!"

The "nifty", as wisecracks or spontaneous remarks are called, drew a laugh and was recorded by a columnist the following day. Within the week it made other columns but was never credited to the same man. A fortnight later it was sold to a humorous weekly and a month later the same gag was recorded by a Hollywood correspondent who chronicled that it really was pulled by Al Jolson at the première of Sid Grauman's new Chinese Theater in Los Angeles.

In the same night club the same evening a young woman brought up the subject of drama defending and chucked a word bouquet at Mr. Hammond. She remarked: "I don't know why so many dramatic critics are so caustic in their comments. They are merciless at times, never pausing to think that their harsh views may break a player's heart. Percy Hammond, it seems, says the same cruel things but in a more amiable manner."

"Yeh," grumbled a listener, "his is venom from contented rattlesnakes!"

That was a wisecrack. It didn't take long for it to find its way into print and it swiftly made the rounds of the Broadway belt and from there it spread across the country. So renowned a writer as Samuel Hopkins Adams is said to have sold it later to a weekly, after it was recorded in a tabloid newspaper column.

The story teller who appreciates good stories and takes them seriously is the first to revolt at the person who "ruins" a good gag, which is show business for "joke". True, not all of us are good at passing along stories, particularly when they demand dialect. Second rate dialecticians have spoiled many a genuinely comical story. Milt Gross and Harry Hershfield, incidentally, are two of the foremost and highest paid dialecticians on paper in the world, but they are amazingly disappointing in a parlor. On the other hand there are comics whose dialects are delightfully contagious but who miss the mark by a wide margin when they attempt to put dialect on paper.

Perhaps the best known jokesmith in the East is a wit who is neither an actor nor a newspaperman. He is a lingerie salesman, by name, "Pitzie" Katz. He is a household word in the mercantile business and was formerly a vaudevillian. He fortunately possesses that necessary essential known as "personality" and can keep his prospect interested in his amusing tales if not his line of merchandise. One of his first sales, they say, brought $50,000 and the buyer was a New Orleans merchant who succumbed on one joke. The gag offered by Katz was the one about Mrs. Finkelstein who was dying. She summoned her husband to the death chamber and said:

"Max darling, I'm dying. So I sent for you, Max dear; I want to make a confession. I've been unfait'ful to you."

"You're telling me!" replied Max indifferently, "why do think I poisoned you?"

Numerous stage wits, including Al Jolson and Eddie Cantor, seldom purchase stage material because Pitzie Katz and other admirers keep them supplied with the latest stories. Another Katz contribution was the gag that concerned the Rosenbaums. Mr. R. was reading a Jewish newspaper. "Yi, yi, yi," he yi-yi'd, "it says here in de paper dot in Toikey was wracked de Horiental Haxprass killing seven t'ousand Toiks and one Jewiss travelling salesman!"

"Hmmmmm," groaned Mrs. Rosenbaum, "de poor fellow!"

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Another incident that really occurred in a New York hotel foyer and which was broadcast quickly was the following: The late Sam Bernard was proudly telling a group about a dinner given in his honor. Over twelve hundred well wishers assembled to honor the comedian and it affected him.

"I never dreamed," said Bernard, "that I would live to see the day when so many people would honor me."

"Did you make a speech?" asked Lou Holtz.

"I couldn't," he said, as he pointed to his throat, "up to here I was filled mitt tears."

"Aw, don't pay any attention to him," kidded George Jessel. "He cries at card tricks!"

James Madison, perhaps, is better known in the show business than Joe Miller, who, it is alleged, first compiled the best jokes in a book a century or so ago. Until Madison clicked out in Hollywood he was the parent of an annual book, sold for one dollar, which contained jokes, puns, quips, repartee, monologues, dialogues and skits. It was purchased in the main by small-time players, coaches of minstrel shows and directors of private entertainments. Another book, difficult to find these days, was "The Encyclopedia of Comedy", a stout tome of some six hundred pages which outfitted the tent showmen and other entertainers during the mauve decade, but which still supplies many of the Broadway revue hits with material for sketches.

It is amusing to observe the more sensitive vaudevillians trying to claim or protect certain bits of comedy. The theatrical publications contain advertisements every week by actors who warn and threaten joke stealers that they will prosecute to "the fullest extent of the law". But they never do. They depend upon The Vaudeville Managers' Protective Association, The National Vaudeville Artists' Club, Variety (the weekly) and Washington, copyrighting their material with each bureau.

In most cases this is merely a gesture. Most actors will tell you that the copyrights do them no good and that the surest way to keep persons from infringing on their stuff is by catching them at it when they least expect it and taking the offender out into the alley to thrash him. Even then, the culprit waits until he goes on tour again and then continues employing the "lifted" material. The actor's protective organizations, however, do what they can to halt the practice and threaten offenders with cancellation of bookings, but so many defendants usually "go away back" and offer proof that so-and-so did it for Tony Pastor that such threats are useless. The wise entertainer will try his luck at frightening his tormentors with a punch in the nose, but as one of them recently paraphrased: "What's the use? I guess my motto will be 'Live and let lift!'"

Many well known wits who make their living on the stage are a total loss off it. Take Groucho Marx of The Four Marx Brothers for instance. This capital comic refuses to entertain at private affairs or at banquets because he cannot be funny without the atmosphere of the theater. He so declared once when a master of ceremonies kept insisting that he make a few funny cracks. After begging the announcer to let him alone with "I am not funny in a dining room and will embarrass myself and the crowd", the man turned away. If you have ever enjoyed Groucho on a stage you probably won't understand his off-stage fright.

On the other hand, Arthur "Bugs" Baer, one of our most adroit newspaper paragraphers, is annoyingly stage-conscious. His pungent remarks and extemporaneous wit on a dais or in a newspaper fall flat in a playhouse. Last year Flo Ziegfeld recruited Baer to bolster up one of his attractions by making a personal appearance at an enormous salary, but the great newspaper-comedian's delivery behind the bulbs was wasted. If you have tittered, chuckled, laughed or howled at Phil Baker, Ben Bernie, Jack Osterman, Jack Benny, Julius Tannen and other stage clowns, you probably were responding to witticisms supplied by the same Mr. Baer. He feeds more entertainers with gags and wisecracks than any other humorist.

One of Baer's best flip cracks reached Ma Ferguson, ex-Governor of Texas two days after she was elected to office. The Bugs Baer observation was "Out West where men

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are men and women are governors". That line flew around the country. His similes are pretty famous, too, and Gilbert Seldes labeled Baer a genius, which all of us on Broadway thought he was a decade ago.

Let it be recorded here that Baer is more modest than Lindbergh appears to be. He seldom complains when a creation of his is stolen by others. Once at the Friars' Club, a theatrical organization in New York, Baer said in a speech: "I would like to get one thing straightened out around here. I just overheard a fellow telling a gag outside and he prefaced it by saying he heard me tell it. It was an amusing quip but I never told it to him nor did I ever hear it before".

It is true, however, that many story tellers in relating gags tag the Bugs Baer label to insure a laugh and also to shelve the responsibility if it fails to get a response. Will Rogers is a puzzle to a lot of people who argue that he doesn't write "all of that stuff". The fact is that Will Rogers does write all of his own stuff and quite marvelous stuff it is. No one has ever been able to supply the name of his "ghost writer", at any rate, nor has anyone found a person who claimed to be his author. Rogers cashed in heavily some years ago with a syndicated item each day which he headed: "The Worst Story I Heard Today". It was a great title. The possibility for material was limitless, for he could use anything. His reputation, of course, excused all.

Irvin S. Cobb's humor is too well known and popular for blackballing but it is true, too, that many a gag told by Cobb got its fame only because he told it. At a cartoonist's dinner once Mayor James J. Walker of New York City said in announcing Cobb: "You lads who make your living with your pens now listen to a man who makes his by his brains!"

Cobb's introductory joke was the one about the Hebrew who refused to pay fare for his little son on a trolley. "He's only four years of age," said the father.

"Well, he looks eight!" growled the conductor.

"Can I help it if he worries?" was the retort.

That joke had been employed by almost every guest in the dining room at least twice in his career.

Incidentally, hizzoner is quite a wag himself. But he enjoys offering the old stories. His favorite, or at least, the one he tells often concerns a former hod carrier who struck it rich and went on a holiday for a fortnight in the South where he suddenly died. At his funeral two old cronies were mourning over his remains.

"Sure and don't he look healthy?" said one Irishman.

"Why shouldn't he?" answered the other. "Didn't he jist come back from Palm Beach?" That's a bewhiskered one.

Another wag in New York who has been responsible for hundreds of wisecracks and funnyisms is Harry Hershfield, also a cartoonist. He quarreled with a former chum recently on account of a gag. It appears that at a poor performance of "Macbeth" several years ago, at the line "Lay on, MacDuff!" Hershfield, who didn't like the show, whispered to Eugene Kelcy Allen, "Lay off, McBride!" meaning of course that McBride the ticker broker should not buy in on the show.

Mr. Allen beat Hershfield to the foyer of the theater at intermission and spread the quip to the critics, all of whom employed it in their reviews of the play the following day. Hershfield paid little attention to the slight at the time, but many seasons after some writers brought the subject up again and credited Allen with the priceless tale. This burned Hershfield up and knocked him cold. He devoted an entire day to assembling those who heard him tell it to Allen that night and had them sign an affidavit to that effect. The affidavit was mailed to dramatic critics and editors. To such extremes, then, do they go these days to establish themselves as the creators of jokes. Allen contends to this day that he told the critics that Hershfield had told the joke to him.

At one time there was a clearing house on Broadway for gags and wisecracks in the office of Walter J. Kingsley, a press agent for the Keith Circuit. The Broadway mob, knowing that the office was a haven for wits and newspaper columnists, hastened there with the latest story or nifty and demanded

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of Kingsley credit for the gag if it should be used by a newspaperman. Alas! Mr. Kingsley's fame for knowing a good gag when he heard one became too well known and he was instructed to conduct a column for a racing weekly; so he has become a "gag-miser".

Gags and wisecracks are at such a premium nowadays, what with so many gag-collectors in Park Row, that some of the paragraphers engage in wars over jokes. A famous quarrel concerned Bugs Baer of The New York American and F. P. A. of The New York World. Baer contended that F. P. A. had been lifting his stuff and signing phoney initials to them, making them appear as contributions. The World columnist retorted that "I'd better begin reading The American", and the matter was dropped. Two evening paper columnists are always at war over stolen material but they talk affably when they meet at premières or on the street. In their papers, however, they call each other old meanies and other silly things.

Speaking of gag wars and credit lines, an editor once counseled this upstart: "Never forget to credit the person telling you the joke. If it is an old joke or a lifted one, the blame goes to the contributor. If it is amusing the average reader won't remember the name of the contributor anyway. He'll say 'Did you see so and so's column yesterday? It had a great gag!'"

Of the cinema gag-men, Ralph Spence, they say, is the highest paid. He supplies Chaplin, Lloyd, Turpin and other stars with comedy. It is also contended that Spence possesses the greatest collection of amusing stories in the world, which he refers to now and then to fit a situation. He has a staff of several former newspapermen who read almost everything and clip for scrapbooks anything that may be revised or rewritten for a film.

Al Boasberg is probably the wittiest wisecracker in Hollywood. He formerly served vaudeville actors. A recent arrival in moving picture land is Wilson Mizner, who at one time was a Broadway playboy and that street's greatest wisecracker. Before deserting Florida for California Mizner who owned land in the south was up on charges during a land fraud investigation. On the stand his attorney asked him:

"Did you ever tell this man that he could grow nuts on that property?"

"No," replied the wit, "I didn't tell him he could GROW nuts on it, I told him he could GO nuts on it!"

Bert Hanlon is jocularly referred to as "a gag miser" because he retails stories to his friends in the profession. Phil Baker's latest gag was purchased from Hanlon for $100. Baker employs it with his "plant", Sid Silvers, and it is unfolded like this:

Silvers: "My brother can stay up in a balloon for days and days".

Baker: "That's against the law of gravity".

Silvers: "I know, but he went up before the law was passed".

It is probably a new joke. None of the old timers on Broadway can trace it.

To set forth further that most gags grow out of situations, there is the current tale of the Scotchman who wearied of witnessing other nation's flyers bring glory to their homelands. He got a plane and planned to fly in it from New York to Glasgow.

On the morning of the hop-off his wife asked him how many sandwiches to prepare.

"Make only one," he replied, "I may never reach there."

As a matter of fact that was what Lindbergh told someone before his famous flight.

Speaking of Scotch gags reminds this recorder that most of the allegedly new Scotch gags are re-writes on old Jew gags. When a New York fire commissioner drew the fire of aggrieved Jews in New York for telling jokes at their expense the vogue switched to the Scotch.

The easiest way to get a laugh is to ridicule something or someone. E. F. Albee, head of the B. K. Keith Vaudeville Circuit, only recently issued an edict against artists telling jokes at the expense of local trolley lines or railroads, and threatened offenders with cancellations. Albee was responsible for cleaning up vaudeville and it was his edict that banished all foul punch lines in songs and indigo jokes.

Joe Frisco is quite a wag. Ziegfeld recruited him from a Chicago rathskeller and

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made him a "Follies" feature when his specialty was jazz dancing. Later he became known as a wit and his salary jumped. One of his amusing experiences has been told in this manner: Frisco applied to a café for a job and the owner asked him how much salary he wanted.

"Oh, $1,500 a week," he replied.

"Lord," retorted the astonished restaurant man, "the President of the United States doesn't get that much!"

"I know," answered Frisco, "but he can't Charleston, either."

Frisco's wit, however, is funnier on a sidewalk when he is surrounded by other clowns and wisecrackers. An impediment in his speech is said to be phoney and used only to get a bigger laugh. This is quite true, for once when he was telephoning a girl friend in a pay station booth and waiting for the connection, a friend paused to say: "How is it you don't stutter now?"

"This is a long distance call," he said.

By way of confession, one joke that attained national fame was claimed by a comedian who accused this writer of stealing it from his routine. The story was the one about the former pants-presser who struck it rich and moved to the residential district of the city where he hoped to raise his young son free of the family dialect. He responded to a magazine advertisement which guaranteed to remove all speech imperfections within six months providing the parent and friends agreed not to see the child for six months. The dialectician agreed.

At the end of the term he called at the school.

"Nu," he beamed, "how is gattink along my leetle son?"

"Splandeed," replied the professor, "hizz doong dendy!"

That gag first appeared in a Broadway column in a tabloid and was a rewrite on a joke swiped bodily from a British Humor weekly. The original concerned a boy who lisped.

There are countless clever men and women who fashion wisecracks and jokes daily but all of their names do not come at this compiling. Such wags as Jimmy Duffy, Texas Guinan, James Thornton, Paul Gerard Smith, Leo Donnelly, Jack Conway, Lou Holtz, George White, Lew Brown, Grant Clark, Bobby Clark, Fred Allen, George S. Kaufman, Marc Connelly, Arthur Kober, Russel Crouse, Robert C. Benchley, Coleman Goetz, George Jessel, Frank Sullivan, Samuel Hoffenstein, Johnny O'Connor, Sime Silverman, Andy Rice, Damon Runyon, Kalmar and Ruby and the late Tommy Gray and Aaron Hoffman were responsible for many of the best known nifties during the last ten years.

And it is a safe wager to make that any of them will subscribe to Bruno Lessing's sentiments: "There is no joke like an old joke," he said, "old jokes are always funny and when told again carry a wallop. The man who interrupts a story teller with: 'Oh I heard that before!' is the world's most unconscionable pest!"

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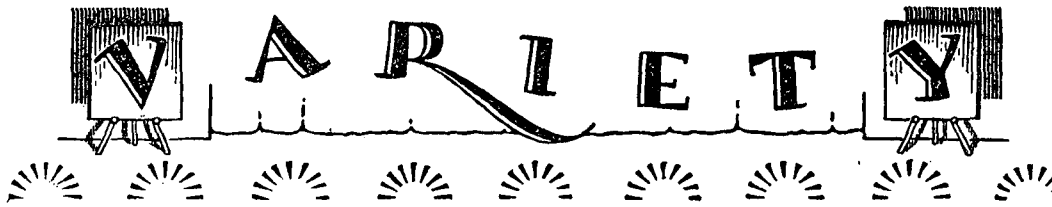


# THE LIGHT THAT FAILED

By Daniel London

BEHOLD in me the exception that proves the rule! When the writing bug bit me, I was wintering in Florida. First I bought a dozen books and subscribed to several magazines dealing with the art of writing and selling manuscripts; then I hunted up half a dozen pseudonyms of pleasing sound, bought me a new bottle of ink, and sat down to write; for I had learned from one of the magazines that the only way to write was—to write.

So I wrote — not in a niggardly, skimpy way, but in broad, sympathetic fashion — on every thing, every place, and everybody I knew anything about. The results were a surprise, even to myself. I had used up reams of paper, and, when I looked the manuscripts over, I found essays, short stories, epigrams, feature articles, fillers, fairy stories, jokes, juveniles, ballads, and even a popular song or two. Surely, this would turn out to be a veritable gold mine!

Great care had been used in the mechanical preparation of the manuscripts. I believed they were flawless. A large book was bought for keeping the record of each, with a place for the sum to be received and the cost of the stamps. After the first batch went off I did not sleep very well; it seemed so new and strange to me to be a great author. But early next morning I was at my desk again, according to schedule, working feverishly to supply the demand which the publication of my first articles would surely bring. There is nothing like *visualizing* in the writing game.

The afternoon mail brought me a magazine containing a brief article on the importance of keeping up with any changes in a publication, such as change of name, address, editor, style, purpose, etc.; so I got out my list and began to insert all the corrections I could find in the current periodicals. This kept me occupied until evening, when I happened upon an article of human interest, which started me off on a short-story for a juvenile magazine. Thinking that a little criticism might do me no harm at this early stage, I sent the story to an expert, who returned it with these words: "Your story would be all right if you would only leave out those tiresome children".

This was the first blow — but not the last by any means. Like well-trained ckickens, all my precious manuscripts came flocking home to roost. Not only the original postage, but also the stamps placed in those neat little envelopes, included for courtesy only, were a dead loss. And some of the editors had been careless enough to use heavy clips and make deep creases on my spotless sheets, which would now have to be re-typed. But I remembered the injuntion, "Even to the twentieth time", and bravely put them all in order and started them off again.

All but *one*. This had not been returned and I had high hopes that it had been found "available", which gave me the necessary courage, I think, to persevere. After a month it came limping back with a tag on it stating that the magazine to which it had been sent had expired two years before in the early spring. Evidently something had been overlooked in my notes on "removals".

It was about that time that I happened upon a paragraph by a certain famous editor to the effect that he was not averse to script,



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although most editors preferred manuscripts that were type-written; so I painfully copied out two of my briefest pieces in long-hand and sent them to him, thinking to touch a sympathetic chord. When they came back, however, nothing was said about my beautiful pen-work, only he seemed to be irritated because one of my stamps had melted with the heat and stuck to the envelope.

My pseudonyms did not always work out as I had been led to believe, although selected with the greatest care — feminine names for household hints and murders, youthful names for juveniles, and very formal masculines for business and finance. To a business magazine I forwarded an article under one of these serious pen names, telling business managers in general how their establishments should be run. With it came a neat card saying that such articles were usually signed by the author's own name, and preferably by a man who was known to be actually running a business. By the ill-advised use of a pen name, I had thus failed to sell an article of great importance!

When spring was well advanced and the Florida weather became too warm for mental work, which I was informed required a temperature sixteen degrees lower than the optimum for physical labor, I moved northward and built me a studio in the woods with a good view of mountain and valley. It was furnished with ample desks, cushioned chairs, and every other comfort; provided with all those little conveniences that every successful writer must have; and row upon row of shelves were filled with books and magazines, from which successful authors smiled down complacently and encouragingly.

Now, thought I, my subject shall be Florida. I am far enough away to get that bird's-eye view — that visual angle — so essential. So I wrote ponderous articles on Florida in all its phases — only to be told that the papers and magazines were not printing anything about Florida just then except real-estate news. Even Nature seemed to have conspired against me; for when I later sent a description of Mr. Edison's winter home to a prominent weekly the editor said it was all perfectly lovely but the place had been destroyed by a recent hurricane.

Sometimes I feel genuinely sorry for the editors. I think they must have used up every pretty saying in the English language to gloss over my grief. I have seen nothing to approach these thoughtful attempts on their part except those little fortune-telling cards that one gets from the slot of a penny weighing-machine.

It was Emerson, I believe, who made some remark about seeing in the works of others our own rejected thoughts. Whether or not this is true of ordinary men, I do not know, but it will certainly hold for most of the up-to-date editors in the country if these confessions of mine ever get into print.

But to return to my narrative, or tale. After the Florida fiasco, I looked into matters a little more closely, thinking that, after all, I might be at fault in some minor particulars. Instead of walking the fields, I walked the streets, becoming sociable with the man on the corner and the woman in the shop. New houses, bridges, and roads now attracted me, and many other things I had overlooked before. I opened an account book of items, oddities, suggestions, and characters for future use, when I should write my great novel, and soon its covers fairly bulged with importance.

In order to make myself as callous as possible — like a Japanese during his daily earthquake — I devised a system of records that would work almost automatically, so that I needed hardly to glance at the actual manuscripts, now grown so familiar, before they were off on their next journeys. For each manuscript at least half a dozen itineraries were carefully mapped out in advance and when one happened along in the mail it was simply delivered over in cold blood to the system. None of those day-dreams and hallucinations that had characterized my primitive efforts!

As long as I am making a full confession, I may as well mention a little incident about photographs, which, as everyone knows, sometimes sell an article that is otherwise of no value whatever. I sent an illustrated article to a well-known magazine for girls and it came back with the sentence "*We do not use photographs*" heavily underscored. That was news to me, so I took out the photo-

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graphs and sent it off on a journey in the opposite direction, from which it speedily returned with "*No articles accepted without illustrations*".

Another difficulty that confronted me was the matter of rejection slips. I had already employed them for every purpose suggested in the information articles at my command and still they kept accumulating. I hated to throw them away after all the care taken in their preparation, so I just stopped my local paper and used them for starting the fire, shaving, and dusting my books.

To those interested in the financial aspect of my adventure, I may say that my account to date stands as follows: Stationery, stamps, pens, ink, and glue, $125.57; type-writing, $175.23; books and magazines, $213.14; land, $1000; lumber for studio, $325.41; furniture for same, $275; making a grand total of over $2000. To this should be added, in ordinary cases, the cost of labor in constructing the studio; but, as I did all the work myself when I otherwise should have been writing, it seems hardly fair to attach a pecuniary value to it.

The other side of my ledger shows receipts as follows: Received from a new magazine of humor a check for fifty cents for a joke about a country wedding. This is a great joke and I wish all my friends might read it. I would quote it here but I fear my publisher. Suffice it to say that the original copy of this exceptional joke, together with the check, are now hanging in a beautiful gilt frame over the writing desk in my studio.

I distinctly do not wish to imply that any of the books or magazine articles referred to in the above account of my literary adventures *lack merit*, but simply that their material did not happen to be *available* in my particular case.

## FORTY YEARS OF SHERLOCK

**By Arthur Bartlett Maurice**

IN a villa upon the southern slope of the Sussex Downs, commanding a great view of the Channel, there lives an elderly gentleman engaged in bee farming. With advancing years the reticence of earlier life has mellowed into what might be considered garrulousness. Occasionally he is moved to babble of the exploits of the past, instead of leaving the task of narration entirely to his faithful historian Watson. In one of the tales that make up "The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes" he descants eloquently of the scenic beauties of the chalk cliff upon which the home of his retirement is perched. In the description there is a suggestion of the lines of a Sussex neighbor who lives some miles to the north.

> And here the sea-fogs lap and cling,
> And here, each warning each,
> The sheep-bells and the ship-bells ring
> Along the hidden beach.

Despite his physical vigor and his still unclouded mind, age is descending upon him just as it inevitably descends upon all our favorite heroes who belong in the Valhalla of fiction. The exact date of his birth is a matter of surmise.

Ten years or so ago Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was in the Argonne, a dinner guest of a number of French general officers. It was General Humbert who fixed the Englishman with his hard eyes and demanded: "*Sherlock Holmes, est-ce qu'il est un soldat dans l'armée anglaise?*". There was an embarrassed moment. "*Mais, mon general,*" stammered Doyle, "*il est trop vieux pour service.*" Just how much too old for service Sherlock was Sir Arthur did not see fit to explain. But proper application of the science of deduction, with particular study of the cases of the "Musgrave Ritual" and the "Gloria Scott" establishes the date of his birth as early in the 1850's, and his

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approximate present age as in the neighborhood of seventy-five.

Just forty years ago Mr. Sherlock Holmes made his first appearance upon the scene of fiction. It was in the late autumn of 1887 that "A Study in Scarlet", the story in which he made his initial bow and professional gesture to the world, was published as the year's Beeton's Xmas Annual.

That second natal event was not only unheralded; for a time it was threatened by grave complications. It was a hard case for Dr. Doyle. The newly born literally fought its way into existence against the opposition of hostile hands. In other words, the manuscript went the rounds of the publishers only to meet repeated rejection. Finally the copyright was purchased outright for twenty-five pounds. As an added complication the baby came near to being christened "Sherringford" Holmes.

Now, forty years later, we take up "The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes" to find the author's announcement that these stories are to be the last dealing with the career of the creator of the science of deduction. Perhaps we are inclined to take the announcement lightly and with mental reservation. In the course of the stories published there have been allusions to some sixty or seventy other cases that are yet unrecorded. Fascinatingly suggestive are the titles. What about "The Adventure of the Tired Captain", and "The Trepoff Murder", and the "Affair of the Amateur Mendicant Society", and "The Tankerville Club Scandal", and "The Affair of the King of Scandinavia", and "The Camberwell Poisoning Case", and "Ricoletti of the Club Feet and his Abominable Wife"? Those were of long years ago. "The Case Book" mentions others; "Vanderbilt and the Yegman", "The Two Coptic Patriarchs", and "The Case of Isadoro Persano".

Then again there was substantially the same threat with the story "The Final Problem", which sent Holmes to apparent death over the edge of an Alpine pass, when Doyle felt that, like Frankenstein, he had builded an amiable monster from whom he could not escape. Yet Holmes reappeared to play his part in the twelve stories of "The Return of Sherlock Holmes"; to follow the trail of "The Hound of the Baskervilles"; to bring light out of darkness in the enigma of "The Valley of Fear"; and to frustrate German war intrigue in the fugitive tale, "His Last Bow".

But perhaps the time has come to accept the verdict of finality. How rich in variety and achievement the forty years have been! In the matter of world-wide popularity never in the long history of fiction has there been a figure comparable to Sherlock Holmes. A dozen readers know him intimately to one who is acquainted with the name of Robinson Crusoe, or Uncle Tom, or Mr. Pickwick, or the Count of Monte Cristo.

Spain has her Don Quixote, yet in Spanish-speaking countries Sherlock Olmes is a byword whereas the Knight of La Mancha is merely a memory. Years ago in Barcelona there was a literary factory employing a score of hack writers engaged in turning out "Sherlock Ol-mes" adventures with such fantastic titles as "Sherlock Ol-mes and the Poisoners of Chicago", "Sherlock Ol-mes and the Stranglers of Pittsburg".

But is he, after all, a character merely of fiction? There are in the world thousands who refuse to accept him as such. A party of French school-boys was taken to London. The boys were asked whether they wanted to be shown first the Tower, or Westminster Abbey, or the British Museum. Unanimously they decided that they wished first to see the house in Upper Baker Street, that was the residence of M. Sherlock Holmes.

When Doyle first tried to dispose of his hero in "The Final Problem" he was amazed at the public concern and indignation. One letter of remonstrance from a woman began: "You brute". He heard of others who wept at the idea of Holmes going over the ledge of the Alpine pass locked in the arms of the sinister Professor Moriarty.

For years part of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's correspondence has been made up of letters to Sherlock Holmes with the request that he forward them. Watson has also been

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the recipient of a number of letters in which he has been asked for the address or the autograph of his brilliant colleague. A press-clipping agency wrote to Watson asking whether Holmes would not wish to subscribe. From all countries communications have come asking the coöperation of Holmes in the investigation of mysterious cases and offering large rewards. Finally with the announcement that Holmes had decided to retire to his present exile on the Sussex Downs several elderly ladies volunteered to keep house for him, and one offered the particular qualification that she knew all about bee-farming and could "segregate the queen".

# DEDICATION TO A BOOK

*A. E. Housman: Signa pruinosae variantia luce cavernas*

**By Edmund Wilson**

(A translation of a poem in Latin elegiacs prefixed by Housman to his edition of Manilius, the astrological poet, and dedicated "Meo Sodali, M. I. Jackson, Harum Literarum Contemptori". It is said to have been called by Gilbert Murray the best poem in Latin written since the ancient world.)

The starry signs that freak with light
The frosty caverns of the night,
Sea-born and bright when daylight dies —
Together we have watched them rise,
Late wandering, where fields lay wide,
The lone and silent countryside.
So once, while still our place was blank,
The poet saw them where they sank,
Setting below the Latian sea;
And, mindful of mortality,
Earth-sprung and doomed to earth ere long,
He looked aloft and launched his song
Against the everlasting stars —
Alas, to leave with many scars
A warning all too plain of odds
That mock the man who trusts the gods!
For, though to Heaven dedicate,
With all the universe for freight,
His verses found misfortune fast
And, washed upon our strand at last,
Shipwrecked and battered, blurred and lame,
They scarce can tell their maker's name.

I have not plied, importunate,
The stars that harass human fate
Nor, begging guidance from above,
Besieged the gods; but, touched with love
Of human glory swift to fade,
Have sought a name through human aid,
And, man, have chosen among men
To stead no heaven-assailing pen
A comrade, mortal-lived but stout,
Whose name will bring my volume out.
— "O comrade," let me say, "whose name
May perish with my pages' fame,
Yet worthy through thine own to live:
From human hand to hand, I give
To thee who followest away
The rising signs that seek the day
This present from a western shore —
Take it: to-morrow runs before,
With those that life no longer owns
To lay our flesh and loose our bones —
To dumb with all-benumbing thrust
Our wits that wake not from the dust —
And rend, like learning's lettered leaf,
The bonds of fellowship as brief".

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# LIFE AMONG THE ADVERTISING AGENCIES

By Marion F. Nickell

ADVERTISING Agencies have their lure. The romance of big business. The thrill of fresh discovery. New inventions — short cuts to old-time processes that may revolutionize the lives of millions. The injection of scientific method into analyses of markets. "Twenty thousand for that study — but look at what it showed us — what we did as the result."

The campaign drawn up. The manufacturer sold. Public enlightenment as to care of teeth — nutritious breakfast foods — the children's school shoes. Whole communities swinging into industry with salesmen's orders. Prosperity. Dealers content. Families — lives of uncounted numbers enriched.

No wonder such agencies are popular with their elect. Advertising — the union of the arts — of writing and of painting. The love and discriminating choice of words. Will they carry? The ecstasy of creation. Language with a punch.

Illustrations — with color, or without. Discussions as to tone — the composition — power in this periodical and in that — on the label — cost of process. Results that show. Inquiries coming in last month. Enlargements at the factory. More 'billing' at the Agency.

Beauty, simple or adorned, — good taste — supreme in the better Advertising Agencies. Attractiveness of equipment, amounting at times to quiet splendor. Pulchritude of youth. Young bloods with marked *savoir faire*. Clothes that count — that tell a silent story of success.

The setting of the Agency establishes its keynote — gives just the proper tone of dignity — of assurance. Business experts, here, to advise the manufacturer as do his banker or his lawyer or his doctor on other matters — as to the soundness of his merchandising methods and his policies.

Buildings architecturally sound are usually chosen, therefore, to present this dominant note — often along a widening thoroughfare — with views from Agency window heights of sparkling lake or river. Sometimes, Agency men will utilize a fine old mansion still left down-town, with its dignified mansard roofs, graceful balustrades, marble mantel-pieces, and perhaps an old shade tree to break some bleak vista of brick wall, outside.

Drawing-rooms instead of ante-rooms in the more exclusive Agency — each with an atmosphere of its own. Furniture of distinction — thick carpets of harmonizing shades — fresh flowers — bronzes — an occasional painting on the wall, electric lighted. 'Danersk' is gone in for at J. W. T.'s in Chicago — walnut of a soft woodland brown at W. & C.'s — Old English Prints at L's. Each separate entrance room has its pink cheeked, smiling houri at the desk.

The staffs. Those girls — easy to look at — gentle of manner — with just sufficient sparkle, repartee, to keep a man, an Agency man, up to the mark. Glowing cheeks, and moist, dewy eyes — soft waving hair — and grace. Style, too. Good dancers, some — but that's another story. They're always getting married — or else coming in with new hats and pretty clothes. Sometimes, they shyly show their 'rings'.

Promising young fellows fresh from University or College, but with 'background' — and eager for opportunity. Good to look at, too. Modest, respectful, brisk. Arrow-Collar, Hart-Schaffner-Marx young men, mostly. They go in and out together at noons like herds of startled deer.

These youngsters conscious of their future, have just the right shade of deference for the chiefs, for the older dogs who affect their monocles, black ribbons, and white piquet. I like these older men who have seen their victories, defeats, and victories again — who stand firm. Roosevelt's picture is on many of their walls — the portrait of some member of their family in silver or in tooled Italian frame, stands on their desk — a small volume

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of Epictetus or a lifetime favorite is in the pocket of their coat — a well worn brief-case, within quick reach — they display a jaunty confidence of manner that belies graying locks as they swiftly pass for Florida, the shore, or factory.

Temperament aplenty — that's what they call it in the Agency. They're always blazing or else deadly cool while waiting the concussion. Sometimes impulsive, excited — humorous, often — kindly, always — judicial, too.

There is the copy-writer who requires a fresh orchid on his desk for inspiration. Another who demands clippers and carved camels with two humps. The account executive who bought a new yacht when he began a new campaign. The one who recommends 'research' with accent on the 're'. He'd studied Latin once.

A stern attempt to escape the charge of temperament in a few Agencies. Rooms that look like counting houses. Glass cages. Stop-watch assignments for the 'writers'. All set? Ready. Go. They're off. Copy that's a wow! In quantity, too. Rubber elastic that shall live in history and in story. That new stenographer is pretty. That phrase is good. It's time to eat. Hurrah. What tea-room shall we go to?

Lights that burn at night. Chiefs that look ahead for future business. "Do you like that stocking?" says one, pulling out a wisp of colored woven hosiery that boasts some special 'feature'. "I want to know. I'm going to handle that account some day. I met Y, who makes it, on the links, last week and played with him." Chiefs who have to meet the overhead, no matter what.

Jargon decided. 'Contacts' — 'consumer appeal' — 'dealer reaction' — 'sales volume' — 'the media' — 'dealer display' — 'follow-up' — 'more billing' — 'the client'.

Make way for 'the client'. The client round whom all else revolves. The client who must be stalked. The client who must be sold. The client who must be placated. The client who must be restrained. The client who gets wabbly. The client who must be advised and reasoned with. The client who comes up to town. The client who must be entertained.

Changes dramatic, electrifying in the Advertising Agencies. A narrow nook, informal of access, and stuffed with files and canvasses — suddenly expands into a sumptuous suite, approached with ceremonies. An account, long nursed, built up, is switched to N's without apparent rhyme or reason.

Advancement recognized. "The So-and-So Agency takes pleasure in announcing that Mr. D. D. Blank, formerly Treasurer, has become General Manager of the Company," is an announcement read in box in some favorite journal of the clan.

"Begin from the ground up," says the old saw. "I did it in eight years," briefly admits a man who handles three of the best accounts in the Mid-West. He's on a sound basis, too. But no yearling.

Men supposed to be with such and such an Agency, amazingly found elsewhere. You can't keep track of them — these younger men. Whether they control the account or not, they change. You learn to seek the social notes of Printer's Ink for record of their flittings — the oases where their caravans are halting.

Loyalty to each other, an outstanding characteristic of the Advertising Agency of the higher type. You often see an advertisement like this in newspaper or in trade journal, "The H. & H. Agency wishes to announce that Mr. Dash, all round Agency Executive, associated with this company for the past four years, is open for a new connection in the near future. He knows how to make accounts grow, and has our entire confidence".

Turn-over not so rapid with the mechanical and 'office force'. Something seems to hold them. If not the work or money, then perhaps it's love or duty or solid comfort. No one really knows. But most of these stay on — except the girls, who marry off in time — the pretty ones at least, and those with charm.

A man's world, for the most part, the Advertising Agency, where the 'boys' can smoke at ease after hours and talk things over freely. Women executives not so many — but those that stick have won respect for plugging that is constant, quality and amount of writing done, and occasionally

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daring moves. "We're automotive here — a woman can't understand the work of this particular Agency," a woman is sometimes told. But in food accounts, especially, the woman's voice is often heard today.

Agencies are consistent — certain ones, at least. When not advertising the client's product, they advertise themselves — their special services, their function and relation to modern business. Bless them, I love them for it.

"'I want some more,' said Oliver Twist" one such advertisement begins, and then plunges into an account of the development of the Everready Radio Batteries account — and how they did it.

All kinds of people are in these Advertising Agency ranks, especially where the Agency maintains its own printing and art departments. Very democratic these can be, from their grinning scamps of printer's devils to the topmost chief, a courtly gentleman of the old school — with a generous filling in the center of the business sandwich, of big eyed flappers, stalwart young fellows smiling or elbowing their way according to their natures, an occasional dignified, clear-headed woman, some middle aged family man, an impetuous, go-getting contact man or two.

Large, impersonal, highly developed organizations, over-specialized — others small, friendly, doing a general business, giving an all-round experience, grown-up like Topsy and wondering how they did it.

Outer and inner circles. Multifarious ideals — varying as do the products, independability, quality, honesty or their lack — ranging from loose, cheap standards to the fine, strong, far-sighted, disinterested, consistent policies of men of character and vision at the helm. But more of these latter, thank God.

## SAVAGE LINES ON MEAN-SPIRITED REVIEWERS

**By Babette Deutsch**

The Sphinxes sit on catlike haunches and view
The stars with the eyes of men, while this horrid lot
Boasts the bodies of men: but hear the way they mew
And you'll know it's the soul of a cat that the creatures have got.
A composite beast each is, whether man or woman, —
With the nose of a louse for decay, and the cheerful heart
Of the smiling hyena, and nothing remotely human
In compassionless bowels or any intimate part.

And it's for the sake of these that forests come down
And proud trees are crushed into paper, for them to trail
Their garbage over! May they have as much renown
As their kin, the cuckoo, the asp, and the slimy snail.
A pox on them all, the thin-blooded spiteful crew!
Perish their bones, and their maggoty brains that are crammed
With envious sick derision, but first let them stew
In the damning indifference of those they have damnably damned.

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# ASK ME ANOTHER, MR. GUEDALLA

By Emily Stone Whiteley

THE allusive Mr. Guedalla has become so elusive that he sometimes baffles even the most astute reviewers. Allusion's artful aid flows from his pen like ideas from Mr. Nupkin's lips: "they comes a pouring out, knocking each others heads so fast, that they seem to stun one another; you hardly know what he arter, do you?"

The following questionnaire has been made up from Guedalla's "*Palmerston*" and is submitted as a literary test to the cognoscenti.

1. "His (Palmerston's) Corinthian monarch was proclaimed (1820) . . . behind the Ionic splendors of his palace. . . . And, no less a Corinthian, Lord Palmerston administered the army." (page 99.)
*Why "Corinthian"?*

2. "Tom, Jerry and Logic, the Oxonian, looked on respectfully at Almack's." (page 99.)
*Who are these three gentlemen?*

3. "A slightly florid contributor to the *Morning Post*, who had already fought High Wycombe as a Radical." (1834. page 193.)
*Who was he?*

4. "A cab rolled under a 'damp-clouded kind of sky', across Belgrave Square, plunged into Chelsea, and set down a wide-eyed couple (with a canary and a multitude of luggage) before a newly painted door in Cheyne Row." (1834. page 196.)
*Who were these two? What was the name of the canary?*

5. "But in November (1834) a peer died. Peers had died before; but this was no ordinary casualty.
'It is an immense event', said Tadpole.
'I don't see my way', said Taper.
'When did he die?', said Lord Fitz-Booby.
'I don't believe it', said Mr Rigby.
Althorp succeeded, leaving an awkward gap on the Treasury Bench." (page 197.)
(a) *Who was the peer?* (b) *And who are the four gentlemen quoted?*

6. "The King (Louis Philippe), himself, profoundly conscious of his umbrella." (page 237.)
*What is the significance of the umbrella?*

7. "A century before, a German voice had murmured in a royal ear, "George be a king." (1846. page 280.)
*Whose voice, and whose ear?*

8. "That easy figure (Palmerston) . . . equally at home in the world of Jorrocks, of Sidonia, . . . of Rastignac." (page 280.)
*Who or what is meant by Jorrocks, Sidonia and Rastignac?*

9. "Lord Palmerston received the staggering news (1846) that Louis Philippe had arranged a double marriage at Madrid and, abandoning the rôle of Napoleon for that of Louis XIV, erased the Pyrenees." (page 286.)
*What do you know about Louis XIV and the Pyrenees?*

10. "The *Times*, after a famous communication to 'Mr Tonans in his den at midnight' made, if not by a lady, at least by the most ladylike member of the Government, Lord Aberdeen, announced that Peel a was convert to Free Trade." (page 271.)
(a) *Who was "Mr Tonans", and why so called?* (b) *Who was the lady alluded to?* (c) *In what well-known novel is this incident used?*

11. "The weight of Carlton House (1806) was thrown into the opposite scale by 'our fat friend', zealous for his Whigs." (page 43.)
(a) *Who is the "fat friend"?* (b) *Who dubbed him that?* (c) *What famous American actor used this expression, and in what play?*

12. "The Lambs were there, William a little sleepy-eyed and his "Cherubina" as gusty as the weather, reserved to flutter in the wilder gales that swept before *The Corsair*." (1811. page 68.)
(a) *Under what title is William usually known in history?* (b) *Who was "Cherubina"?* (c) *What did she have to do with "The Corsair"?*

(*Answers on page XXXIX of the Advertising Section*)

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# ANDRE GIDE AND HIS "FIRST NOVEL"

## By Angel Flores

"I AM quite certain to be the man who will exert the greatest influence fifty years from now," M. André Gide was telling M. André Breton some three years ago, at tea-time, in a *boulangerie* of the rue de Grenelle. Gide was being modest and he knew it.

For more than a score of years he has influenced his generation, a sort of silent, subterranean influence, a little dangerous perhaps. I do not say that he is the greatest figure of his age, but that he is the most influential in French fiction there is little doubt. Anatole France was the novelist of the past; Marcel Proust, of the future. And in spite of Gide's own conviction that he writes "to be reread" I think that he is the most contemporary of writers. France's work was done in a Greek garden surrounded by monasteries; Proust's in a room lined with cork. France represented the very soul of Lutetia, gilded with Hellenic sunshine and scented with medieval incense. Proust is the man with the inverted telescope who shows with magic charm many strange things about time, emotions and memory; in his Saint-Simonian way he measured the waves of the unconscious and studied minutely the paradoxical curves drawn by the seismograph of passion. France was a satyr in a cassock; Proust, a fisherman of shadows. Both remained far from the madding crowd, both kept the lamp of art burning in their sanctuaries and let no violent gust of wind from the boulevards disturb its religious serenity.

Gide, on the contrary, is the dynamo, the generator of currents, the undefined power. He is a living Proteus: a new book, a new Gide, always diving into new depths "rich in new dangers", and bringing forth new colors and new moving forms. People are hesitant about recognizing him; he loves to tease and affront them. In 1925 he sold his precious library of rare and autographed books. He lost many friends but he added 121,360 francs to his bank account.

Gide is a man of extremes. "I was always attracted by conflicting statements, by extremes of thought, by differences of opinions." There is something hyperboreal about him, a mixture of St. Francis and Nietzsche: "a cross between a bacchante and the Holy Ghost". He is the Spiritual father of Alissa Bucolin, one of the most piously beautiful characters of fiction, and yet he was also the creator of the perverse Lafcadio and has remained the champion of the Uranians. He is accused of corrupting the Athenian children and still he keeps a rigorous Huguenot air. He loves his Dada and his Dostoevski. It is this combination of the angelic and the demoniac that qualified him so well to translate Blake's "Marriage of Heaven and Hell".

But beyond this maelstrom of baffling contrasts we find in Gide a sincere precision in dissecting his strange existence and in interpreting the curious workings of our social and moral institutions. Gide is frightfully honest, scandalously so. And it is not through mere coincidence that we find his fictional characters thinking and talking like him. To use Jacques Rivière's felicitous summary, "His work is always confessional; rather than masking, it incessantly betrays its author, even when it does not seem to want to at all". Indeed, we feel that Gide's novels are like pages from a diary and his autobiography "*Si le Grain ne meurt*" (Except the Seed Die . . .) reads like a novel.

In the three little books composing "*Si le Grain ne meurt*" we get a superb picture of Gide's infancy and childhood. André was born in Normandy in 1869. His father, Paul Gide, came from Uzès (Languedoc), his mother, Juliette Rondeaux, from Havre (Normandy).

"There is no greater difference than between those two families; no greater difference than between those two provinces of France which combine their contradictory



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influences in me. I have often persuaded myself that I was forced into an artistic career because it was only through art that I could harmonize all these utterly conflicting elements, which otherwise would have continued to struggle or, at all events, to wrangle within me. Undoubtedly, only those whom a single hereditary impulse directs on one road, are capable of powerful affirmations. From these products of cross-breeding, on the contrary, in whom opposing exigencies, neutralizing one another, live together and flourish, I believe, leaders and artists are recruited."

There was, thus, a sort of geographical rivalry between two provinces of France to attract André. The lavender-scented Languedoc charmed the young boy, with its tropical exuberance and the rain of gold from its smiling skies. But somehow, André was more devoted "to the blossom of the apple than to that of the pomegranate". The Gides were Protestants, the Rondeaux Catholics; but in André's home there persisted the lugubrious solemnity of a Calvinist atmosphere against which the sensitive child revolted. André dreamed of a remote land of sunshine, and somewhere in his subconscious chaos appeared the glowing outlines of a map bearing the name of "Tunis". And yet, Gide may go to exotic lands through phosphorescent seas but his somber Normandy, sure of his return, awaits and receives him, its stern and maternal grayness, its coastal curves producing a sort of nostalgia *ad uterum* in him.

The religious atmosphere of his childhood is partly responsible for Gide's constant interest in his Bible, for the intermittent attacks of his conscience, for his profound introspection, for his many tormenting ethical questionings. Many of his books bear biblical titles and three of them begin with quotations from the New Testament. The lines of St. John xii. 24 that appeared as an epigraph to "The Brothers Karamazov" are used by Gide as the title and symbolic superscription to his memoirs, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit". A man of such scruples belongs to the best French tradition and he will remain with his beloved Dostoevski and his "brother Flaubert" among the most honest souls of mankind.

Of paramount interest to us is that period in the nineties when André strolls on the Boulevards in the company of Henri de Régnier, Viélé-Griffin, Paul Valéry; when he attends the Tuesday receptions of Mallarmé; when he helps in founding the now venerable *Mercure de France*. As for his friendship with Pierre Louÿs, it was not so profound nor so significant as people generally considered: André thought that Louÿs' pseudo-paganism was childish and Louÿs, on the other hand, treated his blue-stocking Huguenot friend with submarine contempt. Then Oscar Wilde appeared. André Gide, Lord Alfred Douglas and Oscar Wilde went together to Algeria. It did not require a long time for André to become fond of Oscar. There was something profoundly analogous in these two souls: their denial of tradition, their theatrical cynicism and their passion for originality. The country that has no Reading Gaols for a Gide benevolently harbors the poor Oscar who sleeps in Avenue Carette (not far from the composer of the *Cloches de Corneville!*) under the frozen mathematical symphony by Jacob Epstein, in Père-Lachaise . . .

The young André attending those sacred séances in the hermetic chapel of Mallarmé on Tuesday evenings could not help being impressed, and even influenced, by the Symbolists. In the same year that he published his anonymous first book, "*les Cahiers d'André Walter*" (The Notebooks of Andrew Walter; 1891), appeared also his "*le Traité du Narcisse*" (Narcissus' Treatise). It was one of those lyrico-philosophical "dissertations on symbols" so much in vogue during the anti-Parnassian days. Gide becomes Narcissus, an Amiel looking into the pool of his conscience, and he endeavors to grasp the very essence of things, the noumena, but on disturbing the mercurial mirroring of the surface, he finds himself confronting a universe of wrinkles, a cosmos of shattered glass . . . "these things go away and vanish" . . . and then he weeps bitter tears. He must see God . . . "our only goal is God", and so he becomes an Argonaut in search of

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the Golden Fleece of the Immovable, "let our goal be immovable". He stops his ears with wax, like a crafty Ulysses, passing the Land of the Syrens, the Land of the Transient and the Mutable. But alas, his "blue voyage", his "*Voyage d'Urien*" (Orion's Voyage; 1893) ends in disillusion. "This voyage is nothing but my dream. We never went out from the house of our thoughts and we have passed by life without recognizing it."

"*Paludes*" (Marshes; 1895) is the triumph of irony. With pitiless vigor Gide ridicules his previous state of mind. "*Paludes*" is an enema of sarcasm, a violent satire on sterile quietude, the *Te Deum Laudamus* for the Gide that was Narcissus. There he makes fun of the Ivory tower, of the mania for introspection, and comments facetiously on that vivisection of consciousness that destroys all spontaneity of feeling and enervates all energy of the will. "'*Paludes*' is the story of one who did not understand life."

*Les Nourritures terrestres* (The Nourishing Earth; 1897) is an emphatic affirmation. An invitation to life and to the enjoyment of all its virginities. "It is not enough for me to read that the sands of the beaches are soft; I want my bare feet to feel them. Each experience, that has not been preceded by a sensation, is useless to me." Gide no longer possesses the artistic reticence of the Symbolists, the aristocratic elegance of the secluded artist, but he is a man, thirsty, hungry, possessed with life . . . He wants to smell all the flowers, to taste the salty humidity of all the seas, to dance to all the musics of the world, to let the snows of the North and the radiance of the South caress his body, to go to the garden of Mossoul and the fairs of Nijni. . . .

So then, when we come to Gide's "*l'Immoraliste*" (The Immoralist; 1902) we see Michel awakening from a glacial somnolence of Calvinism, archeological researches, duty, obedience. His tuberculosis is his alarm-clock. He realizes in those long days the futility of his intellectuality and the many things he has missed. His convalescence brings to him a fuller appreciation of existence and, facing the splendors of a North African landscape, he wants to live, with the utter affirmation of all his senses. Gide once experienced a similar exhilarating thrill while travelling through Algeria and he wrote down:

"Everything contributed to it: the newness of myself and of the places, where I discovered all with rapture; and no refined method, much less my puritan education, could train me to enjoy so many virginities. And then, precisely down there, I had the good fortune to fall ill, very seriously so, but with a sickness that did not kill me; on the contrary, it weakened me for a time, but it taught me to appreciate the rare flavor of existence. It seems to me that for gathering sensations a weak organism is more porous, more translucent, more delicate, better tuned. Despite the illness, if not because of it, I was all receptivity, all joy."

When Michel gets back to Normandy, after his discovery of the body, he tries to build a new metaphysics, or a new morality, and in his vitalistic Jean-Jacquism, he pushes on, beyond good and evil, enjoying everything, unfettered by traditions or taboos, till exhausted, he calls some of his intimate friends to help him . . .

Gide the Nietzschean leads us to the Franciscan Gide. "Les extrêmes me touchent." The Übermensch who broke all the images now repeats with Christian sanctimony "Strive to enter in at the strait gate". From "The Immoralist" we pass on to the rigid orthodoxy and asceticism of his second novel "*la Porte étroite,*" (1909), translated by Dorothy Bussy as "Strait is the Gate" (New York: Knopf: 1924). Even Gide's most acrimonious critics have lingered with reverence before the wistful, immaculate Alissa Bucolin. A classic serenity emanates from the pages of this pathetic *récit*, causing us to feel the same pensive sadness with which days that are too beautiful fill us . . . A few cynics of the "left" have claimed that Gide wrote this book by mistake: that his emphasis was in satirizing religious fanaticism and not in creating sentimental chromos for old women. Quite so. Gide's *purpose* was to write a satire but as his work progressed Normandy appeared to him, wrapped in its gray mist, giving off the pious redolence of its faith and the moved artist spoke of things he had begun to forget, profound

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things that were hidden deep, in the very hypocaust of his soul. Gide, the satirist and the mountebank, kneels down and prays . . . Whoever touches him here touches a saint!

"*Isabelle*" (1911) is a transitional work. We find here, however, a Gide that knows how to tell his story without the help of any great moral transcendencies. Our author masters the technical and decorative part of the straightforward narrative and is now fully equipped to create "*les Caves du Vatican*" (1914), translated by Dorothy Bussy as "The Vatican Swindle" (New York: Knopf: 1925), a *sotie*, as the title page discloses, "by the author of '*Paludes*'". '*Paludes*' is the very center towards or against which all of Gide's works move "by opposition, by reaction, and according to the essential movement of a thought that develops only by dint of correcting itself, refuting itself, destroying itself". Up to this point many readers of Gide have considered "The Vatican Swindle" his masterpiece. Georges Gabory, for instance, places it with Baudelaire's "Flowers of Evil", Dostoevski's "Crime and Punishment" and Proust's "Sodom and Gomorrah II", as one of the four greatest reading experiences of his life.

"The Vatican Swindle" possesses the same pervasive irony and the same *exaggeration of an idea* (Gide's definition of a work of art) as "*Paludes*" and as that "sheaf of wild tares" that he called "*le Prométhée mal enchainé*" (1899), translated by Lilian Rothmere as "Prometheus Illbound" (London: Chatto & Windus: 1919). But where these works are complex, abstract, opaque, "The Vatican Swindle" is limpid, human, delightful. It is perhaps the literary cocktail of our age: the spirit of adventure mixed with the bizarre, the picaresque, the Sherlock Holmes, the vaudevillesque and the pathetic in sparkling brilliance. The pivotal purpose of "The Vatican Swindle", like that of "Prometheus Illbound", is to prove the beauty inherent in a *gratuitous act*. Lafcadio may be the brother of the Millionaire; but quite different from a Raskolnikov or from Carco's "*l'Homme traqué*", he kills without motive, gratuitously, just for the fun of it . . . like Zeus himself. Lafcadio represents to our generation what a Werther or a Jude the Obscure represented to our elders. He is the symbol of our exhausted curiosity.

During the war Gide remained silent, but early in 1920 excerpts from his autobiography "*Si le Grain ne meurt*" began to appear in the Nouvelle Revue Française (still another institution founded by Gide). There was ominous comment in the air and tremulous murmurings among the literary folk. They thought Gide was the wrong fellow to write up his own life! On the 20th of May, 1920, twelve copies of the first volume of "*Si le Grain ne meurt*" came out from a small printing establishment in Bruges: on December 24, 1921, thirteen copies of the second volume . . . A few years elapsed and the news spread that the regular edition of "*Si le Grain ne meurt*" (3 volumes) was printed. For some reason or other it remained in the ice-box of the n.r.f. Two years more passed and when Gide came back from the Congo (the impressions of which he has given us in "*le Voyage au Congo*", 1927) he ordered his book to be released. The entire big edition was sold out in a few days. It gave chance, however, to a few of "the unkillable children of the poor" to buy their copies. The scandal broke out ferociously among the "good" people — they found the book unnecessarily frank! The *avant-garde*, on the contrary, was slightly disappointed; they had looked forward to something fulminatingly vile and mephitic. Personally, I considered it a beautiful work and I agreed with Thibaudet when he said that it is the masterpiece among contemporary autobiographies.

"*Si le Grain ne meurt*" ends with the news that André is engaged to be married. 1894. Gide was then twenty-five.

In 1920 he composed also "*la Symphonie pastorale*", a music fervently warm, delicate, diaphanous . . . the smoke of its religious candor ascending into the harmonious spiral of "Strait is the Gate". Whereas Alissa's problem is one of spiritual renunciation, in this intense, yet for the most part unspoken, spiritual tragedy of the Pastor, Gertrude and Jacques (so reminiscent of the "*Marianela*" of Pérez Galdós and the Mignon episode of "*Wilhelm Meister*") we witness a profound religious drama, a theological duel between Saint Paul and Christ. . . .

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Gide spends the next four years translating Shakespeare, Tagore and Blake, lecturing on Dostoevski, continuing his memoirs and putting the finishing touches on a curious little volume, printed in 1911 in a twelve copy edition. Gide is again the talk of Paris: he has become the public defender of sexual inversion, "*Corydon*" is the apotheosis of Sodom. Before we could suspect the existence of "*Corydon*" we met with pederastic gestures in "The Immoralist". But now in "*les Faux-Monnayeurs*" (1926), so excellently translated by Dorothy Bussy, "The Counterfeiters" (New York: Knopf: 1927), almost every male character is touched with Corydon's habits. . . .

How far will this atmosphere of "The Counterfeiters" prevent the orthodox critics from placing Gide's chef-d'oeuvre among the greatest works of our times? Just recently I was talking with M. Fortunat Strowski, the distinguished professor from the University of Paris and a member of the *Institut*, and he agreed with me that "The Counterfeiters" is, all in all, Gide's masterpiece. "But," he added, "what a pity! . . ." In these past few years the artists have shown, with increasing gusto, their obsession for depicting an "inverted" world: Bourdet gave us his "*Captive*", Carco his "*Jésus-la-Caille*", Istrati his "*Kyra Kyralina*", Proust his "Remembrance of Things Past", (the publishers of which should get bold now, after "The Counterfeiters", and finish their promised and long expected English translation of the series.)

"The Counterfeiters" is Gide's "first novel". With the exception of "The Vatican Swindle", which is a *sotie* (travesty), he has termed his other stories *récits* (narratives): he claims that they were "too simple and too unilateral" to be called otherwise.

A scrupulous novelist, Edouard, is "the central figure; and the subject of the book, if you must have one, is that struggle between what reality offers him and what he himself desires to make of it". He descants often, in Pirandellian fashion, about "the drama of our lives": "the manner in which the world of appearances imposes itself upon us, and the manner in which we try to impose on the outside world our own interpretation". Throughout "The Counterfeiters", and especially in Edouard's journal, there are intimate revelations on the story-teller's creative processes. Mrs. Bussy might have added to her translation the very illuminating notebook, "*Cahier d'exercices et d'études*", that Gide kept while writing his novel and which was published last year in the August and September numbers of the n.r.f. under the title "*Journal des Faux-Monnayeurs*". "The Counterfeiters", together with this "*Journal*", shed much light on the new study of *psychodynamics*, doing for the craft of fiction what Professor Lowes' "The Road to Xanadu" does for Coleridge and the psychology of poetry.

We recall while reading "The Counterfeiters" the author of "The Vatican Swindle", with the same extravagant use of coincidence and the same aesthetic delight in distortion.

"Is it because the novel, of all literary *genres*, is the freest, the most lawless . . . is it for that very reason, for fear of that very liberty that the novel has always clung to reality with such timidity? And I am not speaking only of the French novel. It is the same with the English novel; and the Russian novel, for all its throwing off of constraints, is a slave to verisimilitude. The only progress it looks to is to get still nearer to nature. The novel has never known that 'formidable erosion of contours', as Nietzsche calls it; that deliberate avoidance of life, which gave style to the works of the Greek dramatists, for instance, or to the tragedies of the French XVIIth century. Is there anything more perfectly and deeply human than these works? But that's just it — they are human only in their depths; they don't pride themselves on appearing so — or, at any rate, on appearing real. They remain works of art."

Thus, we must not consider Gide's exaggerations and coincidences in a superficial way, for his aim is to create a novel "at the same time as true and as far from reality, as particular and at the same time as general, as human and as fictitious as '*Athalie*', or '*Tartuffe*' or '*Cinna*'." He is not so much concerned "with the very contrariness of fate, good or evil fortune, social relationships, the conflicts of passions and of char-

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acters" but "with the very essence of man's being". Now this essence of man's being, "the relations between the individual and his self or his God, which are to Dostoevski all important" is to Gide the very *raison d'être* of his novel.

The interpolated episodes of the Profitendieus, the Moliniers, the Vedels, the La Pérouses, the Douviers, Lady Griffith, the Passavants, Edouard, Boris and Bernard intertwine themselves with such felicity that we are tempted to gulp down the whole volume at a single draught. Gide is the novelist of the stylized, and what may appear to be complex becomes simple because the author contrives to give us the essential in a few strokes. His characters save the plot, and in this last novel Bernard is more convincing than Lafcadio. The handling of the La Pérouse couple alone is enough to immortalize an author. An intense pathos emanates from the almost comic irrationality of this old pair. At times one's laughter becomes wet with tears, and, as after listening to Lilian's story of the sinking of *la Bourgogne*, we feel that a change has occurred in our lives.

The little André who once revolted against the distressing somberness of a puritan atmosphere reappears now to show Armand, Sarah and Rachel as the victims of that quagmire. Most of the characters throughout Gide's novels suffer on account of the tyranny of parents and even come to hate them. There is much of "The Way of All Flesh" in his works. "The feelings one has for one's progenitors are among the things that it's better not to go into too deeply." That explains Gide's love for Lafcadio and Bernard and for all the bastards that go out to live their own lives: "The future belongs to the bastards. How full of meaning is the expression 'a natural child'! The bastard alone has the right to be natural".

When we come to the end of "The Counterfeiters" we remain in a sort of trance, bewildered by the intricacy of a weird machine and the smoothness of its operation. It is the apotheosis of a highly artificialized art from every cog of which rings a strange music. We realize that the counterfeiters were not merely the boys working for Strouvilhou but the whole fictional world of Gide trying to cheat a clever God . . . "The Counterfeiters" reads like a novel of Dostoevski revised by a Pinero of genius.

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# JOHN WILKES, HUMORIST

## By Alexander Kadison

THERE were great rogues before John Wilkes; there have been great rogues since his day; but what other scoundrel has been so brilliant, so witty, so successful in attaining high public honors while flaunting his roguery? Indeed, "Honors without Honor" might well have been Wilkes' motto.

Two hundred years ago this month, a flat-nosed, long-jawed, squint-eyed boy was born to Sarah, wife of Israel Wilkes, malt distiller, of London. Unlike the ugly duckling, the child, John, was not later to be transformed into a swan of incomparable loveliness. If anything, his unfortunate features became accentuated as he grew older. They are all brought out, though with much exaggeration, in the famous etching by Hogarth, who was at one time Wilkes' friend but afterwards his bitter enemy. It was of this caricature that Wilkes, when well along in years, used to remark laughingly: "I am growing more like Hogarth's portrait every day".

Before all else, Wilkes was a libertine. He would often boast that he could "talk away his face" in half an hour, and he had innumerable liaisons. We have it on his own authority that he "loved all women except his wife". He was one of the twelve members of the Sublime Society of Beef Steaks, better known as the Hell Fire Club, which met on the site of Medmenham Abbey, in an old house owned by the founder of the society, Sir Francis Dashwood. It was after this gentleman that the members sometimes called themselves the Monks of St. Francis or, more simply, the Franciscan Monks. Other members of this night club, at which ladies were always invited guests, included Sir John Dashwood-King, the founder's brother; Sir William Stanhope, Sir Thomas Stapleton, and Lord Sandwich. Wilkes, whose never-failing wit enlivened the meetings of the distinguished fraternity, was a member in good standing.

As a politician, too, he was a notable figure for a generation. He made himself famous in the eyes of the Whigs, infamous in the eyes of the Tories. "Wilkes and Liberty" was for many years the battle-cry of those who espoused the cause of Parliamentary reform. In his thirtieth year he was elected to Parliament. Six years later he published his "No. 45", the forty-fifth issue of his vitriolic paper The North Briton, in which he anonymously accused King George III of lying. Wilkes was arrested and charged with libel, but escaped imprisonment by pleading his Parliamentary privilege. From that moment on, he was the hero of the populace. But he soon got into further trouble and fled to France, where, except for two secret visits to London, he was an exile during the next four years. He was expelled from Parliament, tried in his absence, and declared an outlaw. Upon his return he was reëlected to Parliament. He did not, however, serve his term there, but instead served a term of a year and ten months in prison. He was again expelled from Parliament, was reëlected several times, but each time was excluded from the House of Commons. After what has been called his holiday in prison, he was elected alderman, was later sheriff, and in 1774 became Lord Mayor of London. In the same year he was once more returned to Parliament. This time he was permitted to take his seat, and he remained a member until 1790, having in the meantime become a convert to Toryism. Even for a demagogue and political agitator, his career was an uncommonly turbulent one.

What contributed to this as much as anything else was his attitude toward the American colonies. Though he is not so much as mentioned in the histories of our country to which I have turned at random, as a mere matter of accuracy his name ought to be prominently featured. I hazard a guess that it was probably suppressed in the first in-



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stance by some early American guardians of the public morals because of his reputation for profligacy: respectable people, after benefits have been received, like to feel that all their friends have been no less respectable. The fact remains, however, that Wilkes ardently championed the American cause to the great embarrassment of the British government. As far back as 1763 and 1764, in The Boston News Letter and in The Boston Gazette, one finds references to the cry of "Wilkes and Liberty". A few years later the Sons of Liberty sent Wilkes a letter congratulating him on his election to Parliament. Among the signers were John Adams and Joseph Warren. In his reply the English libertarian assured his admirers that he intended to make the interests of the American colonies "the study of his life", whereupon more letters and various demonstrations followed. Nor was Wilkes ignored by the Southern colonists, for the people of South Carolina, in 1770, subscribed fifteen hundred pounds toward the payment of his debts. In the same year his release from prison was widely celebrated in America.

In April, 1775, Wilkes, who was then Lord Mayor of London, personally laid before King George a petition protesting against the treatment of the American colonies, which was bluntly characterized as "iniquitous". Two months later, in company with the aldermen and common councillors of the city, he presented another petition to the king, in which the war with America was vigorously condemned. During that year he delivered three lengthy speeches to the same effect in the House of Commons. Indeed, throughout the war he spoke in behalf of peace on every possible occasion, insisting that the task which had been undertaken by Great Britain was a hopeless one. Especially did he denounce the British generals who had enlisted the aid of Indians against the colonial rebels. All in all, from 1775 to 1780 he delivered ten set speeches in which he showed himself to be a warm friend of the United States.

"A successful resistance," he said in the course of one of his Parliamentary orations, "is a revolution, not a rebellion. Rebellion, indeed, appears on the back of a flying enemy, but revolution flames on the breastplate of the victorious warrior. Who can tell, sir, whether in consequence of this day's violent and mad address to His Majesty the scabbard may not be thrown away by them as well as by us; and, should success attend them, whether in a few years the independent Americans may not celebrate the glorious era of the revolution of 1775, as we do that of 1688?" On another occasion Wilkes prophesied the outcome of the American Revolution. "The Americans," he declared, "will dispute every inch of territory with you, every narrow pass, every strong defile, every Thermopylæ, every Bunker's Hill. A train of most unfortunate events will probably ensue, and the power of recruiting, perhaps subsisting, your weakened forces, at such a distance, be lost. . . . The Americans, sir, are a pious and religious people. With much ardor and success they follow the first great command of Heaven, 'Be fruitful and multiply'. While they are fervent in these devout exercises, while the men continue enterprising and healthy, the women kind and prolific, all your attempts to subdue them by force will be ridiculous and unavailing, will be regarded by them with scorn and abhorrence."

It has been accurately said by one of his biographers, Horace Bleackley, that the story of Wilkes' life is a history of the period. For he was more than just a licentious politician. Among his intimates he numbered d'Holbach, Diderot, and d'Alembert. During his exile he visited Voltaire, who flattered him. The unknown author of the letters of Junius entered into correspondence with him. He knew Smollett and Samuel Johnson and a host of other celebrities. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, issued an edition of Catullus (which probably appealed to him because of the pornographic passages), and tried to persuade the House of Commons to enlarge the library of the British Museum. In an age of widespread religious bigotry, he spoke eloquently in favor of universal toleration. "I would not persecute even the Atheist," he said in the course of one of his three speeches advocating freedom of conscience. "I think he has a right to toleration, and for my own part I pity him, for he wants the consolation

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which I enjoy." This sentiment has been surpassed only by Thomas Paine's magnificent view that "toleration is not the *opposite* of intolerance, but is the *counterfeit* of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, and the other of granting it". Wilkes, in a word, was a many-sided and broad-minded man besides being a "character".

But what makes his personality of everlasting interest is his extraordinary wit and cleverness in conversation. Boswell, in his great biography of Johnson, tells of the three meetings that took place between Wilkes and the lexicographer, who had been enemies for years but who got on splendidly the very first time they met, largely because of Wilkes' tact, which he could exercise when he wanted to. "Among all the bold flights of Shakespeare's imagination," exclaimed the demagogue, "the boldest was making Birnam Wood march to Dunsinane; creating a wood where there never was a shrub; a wood in Scotland! Ha! ha! ha!" "You must know, sir," said Johnson, after some more jests at the expense of the Scotch, "I lately took my friend Boswell and showed him genuine civilized life in an English provincial town. I turned him loose at Lichfield, my native city, that he might see for once real civility; for you know he lives among savages in Scotland and among rakes in London." "Except when he is with grave, sober, decent people," answered Wilkes, "like you and me." Johnson's hostility to Wilkes was partly due, in the first place, to a comment made by the politician, more than twenty years before, on a laughable error in the first edition of Johnson's "Grammar of the English Tongue". "The letter *H*," the learned doctor had inadvertently written, "seldom, perhaps never, begins any but the first syllable." To this Wilkes had instantly replied: "The author of this remark must be a man of quick appre-hension and of a most compre-hensive genius". It was not until the fourth edition of the "Grammar" that Johnson deigned to make the belated rejoinder: "It sometimes begins middle or final syllables in words compounded, as in *block-head*".

In the midst of his troubles with George III, Wilkes was once asked by someone to take a hand in a game of cards. He replied that he did not know the difference between a king and a knave; and the witticism was widely quoted by the Whigs. Another of his remarks directed against the monarch was the assertion that he loved the king so well that he hoped never to see another. Years later, however, after Wilkes had joined the Tories, the king was engaged in friendly conversation with him and happened to speak of Sergeant Glynn, who had been Wilkes' counselor during the struggle with the sovereign. "Sir," replied the ex-demagogue, perfectly unabashed, "he was no friend of mine. He was a Wilkite, which I never was."

It was at about this period that an old woman who had not kept abreast of the times, and who was evidently unaware of Wilkes' political metamorphosis, cried out in the street, as he passed: "Wilkes and Liberty!" "Be quiet, you old fool!" muttered Wilkes. "That was all over long ago!" According to another story illustrating his cynicism, he once privately informed the speaker of the House of Commons that he was about to deliver a petition from a set of rascals and numskulls, but presently introduced his observations with the announcement: "Sir, I hold in my hand a petition from a most intelligent, independent, and enlightened body of men". Crabb Robinson quotes him as saying: "Give me a grain of truth, and I will mix it up with a great mass of falsehood, so that no chemist shall ever be able to separate them"; but no doubt his boast should not be taken too seriously. At bottom he was a humorist, and it was as much his love of fun as his love of freedom that got him into many a scrape.

Certainly this was the case with the obscene and blasphemous "Essay on Woman", in which Wilkes and his friend Thomas Potter, the dissolute son of an Archbishop of Canterbury, parodied Pope's "Essay on Man". There is reason to think that William Pitt found the collaboration amusing; indeed, the Great Commoner seems to have praised it in private. And the "Essay on Woman" *is* amusing, as I can testify: even

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though the verses were officially burned by the public hangman, they can still be read. But Wilkes' sense of humor, if it led to his becoming a national figure, at the same time caused him no end of trouble. For it was not alone the much talked-of "No. 45", but also the scandalous "Essay", that resulted in his expulsion from Parliament, his banishment, and his subsequent incarceration. Unfortunately it is not feasible to reproduce any part of the poem here.

There appears never to have been a situation that he could not face with a jest. The very name of the periodical that he founded early in his career was in a sense a lampoon. The novelist Tobias Smollett, a Scotchman, had been made editor of a newly established Government organ called The Briton. Thereupon Wilkes, who was English to the core and who shared the strong national bias against Scotland, started a rival paper of his own and satirically named it The North Briton. What could have been more impudent, unless it was his caustic reply to the Earl of Sandwich, who had pleasantly predicted that Wilkes would die either of the pox or on the gallows? "That depends, my lord," said Wilkes, "whether I embrace your mistress or your principles." Another tale concerns Lord Egremont, a snobbish noble whom Wilkes could not abide and with whom he seems to have been at one time eager to fight a duel. Quite suddenly, however, his lordship died. On hearing the news, Wilkes, affecting indignation, exclaimed: "He has played me a mean trick!" As for fools, Wilkes had scant patience with them. When a young common-councilman not overburdened with sense chanced to remark that it was strange that he should have been born between twelve and one o'clock on New Year's Day, Wilkes, having made a rapid mental calculation, observed: "Not at all, considering that you must have been begotten on the first of April".

A versatile, jovial scamp was Wilkes, whose lack of conscience was his guide. Recent biographers have removed some of the whitewash from certain historic figures in an endeavor to show that they were only human beings, with the human failings common to us all; but no biographer could possibly show that Wilkes was really worse than he has always been depicted. His enemies portrayed him in the darkest colors at their disposal, and wherever he found that they had left a high light in the picture, he himself filled it in. His aim seems to have been to turn the contemporary portrait of himself into a silhouette, and he succeeded admirably. Yet, however black he has been painted, at all events it can never be plausibly maintained that his blackness was a dull black.

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# ANONYMOUSLY — John Farrar

Bread Loaf School of English,
Bread Loaf, Vermont.

CREATIVE writing cannot be taught! Certainly not; but five years of time may be saved for the person with the creative urge by contact with the right people, people who are willing to be frank with advice and patient in arguing through the individual problem. As I write the Bread Loaf Conferences in Creative Writing are opening for their second year. It is our ambition that there shall be one place in America where a group of young writers and journalists who believe in the idealism that should be back of all creative work will also take cognizance of the practical working out of that idealism.

Last night Burges Johnson told us of various writing "careers" undertaken by former students of his. Few teachers in America have been so successful in combining the study of art with the willingness to aid students when it became necessary for them to find jobs. Discussion naturally drifted to a consideration of other "schools of writing". Our greatest difficulty at Bread Loaf has been in making it clear that we do not *promise* anything.

It is true that from our first season we gained results, results such as the writing and publishing of short stories, articles, poems and one novel. Yet these results were entirely a matter of the actual talent of the students. We can give them no easy short cuts to success. We can give them useful hints about how to regulate their ambitions and their work, but very little more.

Our quarrel with most practical writing courses, particularly those advertised as correspondence schools, is that they promise or seem to promise actually to teach people to write successfully. All we hope to do is to expose them to the people who are fairly successful in our profession and who have dedicated two weeks of their time to talking with a group of aspirants, reading their manuscripts, and being as frank as the spirit and will-power allow. It is not an easy task; but it is a fascinating one. Middlebury College has been courageous and generous in allowing this experiment. Dean Davison of the Middlebury faculty has spared no thought nor time to its development, and President Moody has given us constant encouragement and advice, as have all those who have consented to act as a part of the staff or as special lecturers. Another month, and I hope to write of the developments this year. As I write, the session opens tomorrow.

Robert Frost was here not long ago, and in most mellow mood. He talked several times to groups of the earlier summer school students, and met many of them personally. His depression of last winter seems to have vanished. He is at work on some new poems, and is looking forward to a visit to England in the autumn. Mr. Frost lives just over the mountain, and has always been highly interested in the Bread Loaf experiment, since it represents not only academically sound work but a most unusual spirit of broad minded and tolerant inquiry.

Vermont is lovelier than ever! It is cold: but the air is clear. Hervey Allen, his charming bride and ourselves motored down the mountain last evening to buy marshmallows for roasting. The clouds were piled in great masses of slate gray, touched with gold and silver, and later with scarlet. It is a gracious and kindly country. The county fair is in full blast, with its offerings of prize live stock and juicy hot dogs. Burges Johnson, it seems, was born in this golden state. He says it takes him only a week to



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go back to saying "kiyow" for cow, while I confess that I have never escaped from the terrors of "idear".

With luck, one may occasionally see a good play tried out in Stamford. This month held no luck for me. Arthur Hopkins' production of "Burlesque" was said by all to be excellent. I missed it. Instead I saw a strange concoction of character and sentimentality called "Kibitzer" which the sterling performance of Edward G. Robinson failed to redeem. And good gracious, Miss Anglin! After pledging myself to be to you as Alexander Woollcott is to Mrs. Fiske, I practically ran all the way to Stamford to see you in a play called — was it "Gypsy April", or "Bohemian July", or "Mad August"? At any rate, it was terrible! You didn't know your lines, or at any rate I couldn't believe they were your lines, and alas, the story of an erring but charming grandmother requires much courage to play. For this I commend you; but, dear lady, it was courage summoned to a cause lost before the first curtain.

The head waiter is coming into his own in the motion picture. This is all to the good! Both Lewis Stone and Adolph Menjou, those suave exponents of adroit worldliness, have recently been gracing the silver screen with portraits of waiters whose inclinations are far above the social level of the clapped hand and the held match. The Menjou picture, "Service for Ladies", is commended enthusiastically to all those who like their motion pictures graceful, amusing and fluffy. The Lewis Stone performance was pretty vulgar. It is my impression that the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation has been turning out some excellent froth for the moving picture theaters of late. From my standpoint this is far more important than any number of drab character-studies of high flown epic dramas. The comedy and the melodrama and the travel picture: there, for me at least, is the motion picture. I go to the movies to be amused or thrilled. If I want tragedy, there is plenty of it to be found seeing first night performances at Stamford, Connecticut.

The reader must be puzzled, in this early autumn season, to find volumes to while away the passing hours. Oppenheim's hundredth novel is not his best. It has flashes of excitement, good enough to recommend for casual reading. Dorothy Van Doren's "Flowering Quince" is a rich character study. "The Grandmothers" by Glenway Wescott, is important and powerful and dull. Charles Norris has written glowingly of an actress in "Zelda Marsh". But there is a fine new edition of the novels of Jane Austen issued by the Oxford University Press which should encourage the fiction reader, and there is Colonel Lindbergh's "We", and Harvey Fergusson's "Wolf Song". The ladies tell me good things, too, of Storm Jameson's "The Lovely Ship".

"Wolf Song" is a superlative piece of writing. I haven't always found Harvey Fergusson's novels easy to digest. There have always been fine passages in them, and keen bits of character; but he has not always written with a complete mastery of his own abilities. "Wolf Song" is a man's book. It is raw, cruel, primitive. It uses the Anglo-Saxon tongue without regard for the old lady from Dubuque. The result, with all its strength, is a book of poetic fire and quality, and there are three unforgettable characterizations; the man, the woman, and the priest. It is not a novel in the ordinary sense of the word. It is the sort of story that Stephen Benét, for instance, could fashion into a splendid narrative poem. Yet, I would not have it changed by one word or one comma. It is, as Mr. Percy Hammond would say, adult entertainment. It is also beautiful. It reminds me a trifle of Joseph Hergesheimer at his best, although Mr. Fergusson has achieved a sparser, a more graphic style. Mind you, I'm not saying that his style is better than the best of Hergesheimer; but it is as colorful without being lush.

You have gathered that I like this book. I do. It puts most western fiction where it rightly belongs — in the ash heap — and emerges as a book, one of the few books, to be put on that special shelf in your library along with "Tristram Shandy" and the others that you re-read when you have the opportunity.

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So much has been written of Lindbergh and his book that it is probably unnecessary to add anything here; but it is the book of a hero mechanic who writes simply and graphically of an exploit which he is too much of a gentleman to consider heroic and about which he is too much of a hero to indulge in fine writing. It is a unique and imperishable document for every boy of every generation to read for as long as deeds of daring are worth while.

This leads to a consideration of Children's Book Week which will be a cause for celebration before the next number of this publication has reached you. The National Association of Book Publishers, guided largely by the fair hand of Miss Marion Humble, has made Children's Book Week a national institution as important but in no other way comparable with Mother's Day. Now if the enthusiasts for Mother's Day were as adroit and as wise as Miss Humble and her advisers and cohorts, by this time we might have a better educated group of mothers in America. There is no question that a regard for children's reading needed to be preached in America. It still does. Yet no parent has an excuse for allowing his own children's reading to be neglected. The lists, the information, the interest, with which Miss Humble's committee will answer inquiries obviate the necessity. Moreover in any town of fair size in this enlightened land, a librarian or a bookseller will be found who will be glad to aid the inquiring parent in administering to the growth of a child's love of books. I should urge that you make it your duty to buy at least one book for one child during Children's Book Week; and, if you have no children, you will find plenty around the neighbourhood. I am quite conscious that there is one in this neighbourhood, and that he's teething! Do your good deed today. Buy a book for a little child. *But* buy it intelligently.

Have you been observing the younger generation? Imagine my surprise and horror when I discovered as nearly as it is possible for me to judge, that *embroidery* has come back. Every morning on the commuter's train to New York from Cos Cob four young things trip onto the train, occupy a double seat, and take out their *embroidery*. There is one Victorian pastime which even the *obscurantism* of the conservative does not lead me to approve. It is real embroidery, too, in the ugliest sense of the word, with flowers that bear no relation even to peonies or the more vivid blooms of autumn such as asters and petunias. Perhaps, however, this activity is mere camouflage. I note that these young ladies have beaux, who hover in the offing. They do not dare invade the realm of needle and thread. Perhaps the young ladies, like most good commuters, prefer to be by themselves and to leave gentle words of courting to the lake canoe or the porch hammock. Who knows? Perhaps some kindly feminine correspondent or masculine observer will inform me on this point. Is china-painting coming back, too? Or raffia work? Or, alas and alack, pyrography? If these were to replace the cross-word puzzle, it would be sad news indeed!

Virginia Woolf's discusssions of modern writing in "Books", the literary section of The New York Herald Tribune, are well worth your perusal. Mrs. Van Doren, as editor of that worthy publication, is to be congratulated upon securing them. Miss Woolf, as the most adroit of modernist writers of fiction, shows that she has capably analysed her own writing problems, and those of her generation. That her essays are suggestive rather than dogmatic is all in their favor.

The offices of Time: The Weekly News Magazine are to move back to New York City from the far flung reaches of Cleveland; and so passes another brave attempt to break the editorial ring of the metropolis. Time has been markedly successful during the last year, but feels the slack, so Britton Hadden informs me, of that close contact with what is going on in the world that apparently only New York can adequately give the American journalist. This is undoubtedly true. No writer should live in New York — no editor should live anywhere else. That, I should say, was a pretty fair statement of the case.

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Louis Bromfield, deep now in rehearsals of his play, "The House of Women", looked remarkably cheery the morning after he landed. Like the sensible young man he is, he showed fewer marks of a long sojourn abroad than most of his fellows. He sported neither a green waistcoat nor a piebald scarf at the neck. Louis is a hard working writer. An ambitious writer, a good writer. He has sense, and that has carried him far and will carry him farther.

The autumn winds are howling around the window. Addison Hibbard of North Carolina has just arrived, and I must go to greet him. I should like to have letters contributed to these columns. How about a few contributions in the way of swift and violent opinion, gentle readers? Living on remote farms, as I'm sure most of you do, there should be plenty of time to write this hard-working columnist what you think of the world of art and science, of books, babies and landscape gardens. Also, send me some puns. One cannot write successfully without punning, and it is a gift I do not possess. Please, then, kind reader, pay me in kind.

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# THE SUPPRESSION OF A BOOK

## By Shane Leslie

I STOOD on the brink of a suicide's grave —my own— for several days last Spring, in Paris.

A book of mine had been suppressed, and I had been prosecuted. I had already committed literary hara-kiri. How much less important was it to commit physical suicide!

Until one has felt the suicide tendency and temptation, one has no right to discuss suicide, or to judge suicides. I felt so certain I was about to die that I waited for Destiny to push me in. One word would have done it.

I don't mind criticism of my personal manners or morals. No writer should. But my flesh shrinks when my style is attacked or my book condemned. A writer with his pride in his work would rather assist at his own criminal trial than watch, as I watched, the trial, condemnation and suppression of a favorite book. The process is akin to watching the torture of a child to which one has given birth.

I entered literature young and tried all the ruts, sentimental poetry, some pious biography, translations from Latin and Greek. I even edited a hymnbook. Then I lent a hand at emancipating the English novel from the coils of its medium. My supreme object was not to be dull. Dullness is the unforgivable sin in writing.

My first novel described life at Eton. I had not been popular at Eton and my book was even less so. I gave the wonderful system and spirit of the school its full praise but I criticized some of the small and unworthy houses, one of which had had the misfortune of housing me. Life at Eton could afford a golden happiness or a blank misery according to the House the boy was fortunate or unfortunate enough to strike. I said so and was never forgiven. Englishmen are sensitive about their Schools but not about their Universities.

I next described life at Cambridge very freely and called my book "The Cantab", which was the mediaeval Latin for a Cambridge man. This book brought the roof down on my head.

I had worked for two years until it had expanded into two novels. The first, "The Cantab", was published and the second, "Babylon", was announced. "The Cantab" was a hectic, heliographic vision of the University twenty years ago. It was full of portraits and half-portraits. I gave athletics and studies, architecture and sport, antiquarianism and atmosphere their due weight. To make complete the House of Youth, I added sex and religion, which seemed to me the two most important things in life, though it is the custom of the English to pretend that neither really matters. I thought otherwise, but I was unprepared for the storm which greeted my book.

I had written from a feeling that the English undergraduate meets a hopeless confusion in religious and sexual questions. Inquiring and innocent youth is expected to guess, not to be guided. The only thing which seemed fixed in that wavering world was the rule of rowing. I described the different aspects of religion as presented to my hero, Revivalist, Anglican and Roman, and I caricatured the human ministers of the same, though not the sacred essentials of any. The book was greeted with that critical execration without which a modern novelist knows that he has written in vain.

I was writing in Paris and the full storm did not break until the Cambridge Review described the book as "incomparably a better and truer book than any novel of Cambridge life yet published". I may quote this because the book is now eternally unobtainable and this was the only flattering word said in its favour. But it put the fat on the fire and the next number of the Review contained the ban of the Catholic Bishop.

It was staggering because so unexpected, but I decided to meet a Mediaeval in medi-



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aeval fashion, and I wrote a letter such I conceived a troubadour on his deathbed might write to an excommunicating Pope. I decided to commit literary suicide and to annihilate my own book.

The Bishop's ban and my withdrawal were published, and percolated through the world. From uttermost parts I received garbled accounts and cross (some very cross) currents. Cables held up my book at sea and the New Zealand Parliament discussed the moral safety of innocent Antipodeans.

Having committed literary suicide, I lay back and rested in my mind. I can only explain how my brain felt and how I approached the pass I did by saying that during health and happiness the grey matter in my skull has the cosy sensation of being in a warm bed with a quilt and two blankets. The quilt remains on or off according to headaches and/or illness. Mental worry or unhappiness usually displace the blankets, leaving, at worst, the brain shivering under a sheet. When the sheet goes, I imagine the mind goes. I had been so worried over the book that I felt not only quiltless but minus one blanket. I was wearied and worn by stacks of letters, some sympathetic and some unpleasanter than anything in the book. Hot coals or herbs of healing rained by every post.

The Press had discovered that the book was obscene somewhere and the righteous seethed in their ink. Detectives sought my dossier, and old ladies sent me their Prayer Books. I had hoped the affair was over with the withdrawal of "The Cantab", but no. There was a further demand for public prosecution and the Home Secretary was overwhelmed with letters. I had withdrawn my book as a Roman Catholic. If the State prosecuted I offered no defence and pretended to take no notice.

I lay back and rested in my mind. I felt I could not have done more. I felt slightly virtuous and a little ill-used. I had no idea that I could or should be prosecuted afterwards. The first hint came from the headline on an American paper published in Paris. I had slipped my comfortable quilt through mental worry, but this new move was like the loss of a blanket. My mind grew chilled. My mind could not rest nor sleep and I spent nights haunting the quays. As the trial approached, peace left me. Anger ejected penitence and more slowly despair undersapped anger. As long as I could remain angry, I knew I should survive, eventually live and write down my disgrace. I grew thinner and more haggard. The Press clamoured for my photograph and I only consented in order that I might possess an official Card of Identity to be found with my dead body, for suddenly and irresistibly the temptation and desire of suicide leaped upon my naked and unresisting mind.

A photograph was taken in which I resembled an opium fiend waking up, or, as a friend suggested, like an earnest chemist. I presented myself to the French police and filled up the necessary papers. They gave me the numbered card with my photograph stamped and affixed, which I knew would bring my body to the Morgue and the news of my death to my relatives. As I knew my body would be refused consecrated ground, I added a note bequeathing it to the Pasteur Institute. I let myself be carried onward by a wave of wrath against police, critics and myself. I let my soul batten on the idea of suicide. I tore the remaining blanket off my shivering mind. My only comfort was that I had no comfort and would be justified in throwing myself off this planet.

I still hugged a last sheet round my mind, for I could not believe that my book would be selected out of all the modern school for prosecution. There was Joyce, Ronald Firbank, Michael Arlen, and Noel Coward, each a genius in the bad books of Mrs. Grundy, and incomparably better sellers. It seemed all too grotesque even when I read the magistrate's condemnation in the Times.

I no longer cared to read my letters. I knew what they would say in advance. But friends took the trouble to bring me verbal news and advice. How wonderfully calm women can be when men become reckless!

I left a few visiting cards with my address scratched out and "La Morgue" written instead. The women I left them on might find out for themselves if I was serious. I thought I was. Every day I went to the

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cemetery at Passy and stood by the grave of Marie Bashkirtseff.

Through women I was kept acquainted with every move in London; how the matter came to the Cabinet and who had been friendly and who had been the reverse.

"You can be proud of the Minister who defended you," whispered a lady passing through Paris.

I felt less suicidal and began to clutch for my blankets. But my mind had passed into a paralysed state and the power of writing entirely left me. I still haunted the Seine, which I had long decided to be the easiest and most artistic exit. I could not bear to look at the newspapers. My unhappy book rushed at me from every sheet. Even my withdrawal evoked no commendation or pity. The free-lances of literature criticised and attacked my abnegation. Then, realising that I could not be right, I determined to do wrong. Both Art and Christianity had repudiated me. I consequently felt careless and unheld by pride in one or obedience to the other.

For one magnificent afternoon I felt emancipated from critics and Bishops. I recovered the writing sense sufficiently to scribble some last verses, a Sonnet on the Grave of Baudelaire and a Sonnet on the Morgue, in which I left my last word on Art and my last word on Christianity, in the style of *Moriturus vos salutat!* A week had passed since the trial of my book and the London police were gathering and pulping all that remained of the edition. The work which I had carried in the womb of my mind for two years was being trampled and rent, ridiculed and annihilated. I felt anger no longer, only a supreme sense of bitter mockery. I no longer felt that anything mattered.

I ceased to make decisions. I let myself drift. I was at the mercy of the first word said by the first friend who spoke to me. One word of scorn or stupidity and I would have thrown myself into the Seine. I felt an enormous power obsess me. I avoided going into Churches for fear this latent domination of my personality and circumstances should leave me. I had a strong sensation of being under ether mentally, and neither amongst the living nor the dead. The bottom of my brain seemed to have fallen out.

My mysterious cards addressed from the Morgue had been scattered on my friends but none had taken any effort to find me there or anywhere. I felt abandoned and, having made up my mind as strongly as I could, I felt no power of remission.

Outwardly life was normal. I went out for a last lunch with a lady, who had kindly collected the French Prosecutor General. He assured me that, relentlessly as he prosecuted pornography, my book would never be suppressed in France. He would not make war against works of art. Only a Frenchman could have expressed it so charmingly. But I was beyond words of comfort, though at the end of the lunch my hostess said in a rather magnificent phrase, "Well, if you are with Flaubert and Baudelaire, why should you be unhappy?" They too had been prosecuted for their books. If either had committed suicide, I should have followed them then and there. What company!

I still felt uncovered under the heavens, and my mind, fraying and fretting itself as much during sleep as in the daytime, was utterly worn out. I felt I could never create again, only destroy. I was ready to destroy myself and I did destroy the manuscript of the sequel to my book, all except two chapters which I left to show what I had done. "Babylon" was the long meditated novel in which the Cambridge characters of "The Cantab" acted their part in the London world. It was a ghastly book and contained what I believed would prove a crushing blow to the White Slave Traffic. It could only be compared with the American novel "Susan Lennox". I destroyed my manuscript and staggered into the graveyard at Passy.

I sat down on the tomb of Marie Bashkirtseff, my favorite haunt, and prepared to take leave of the world. I suddenly had the feeling that the world had taken leave of me and that I was so unimportant that nobody cared or knew what I was doing. I only craved to hear somebody say something beautiful or myself utter some lovely last words which would be remembered. It was the last grain of author's pride.

Then I remembered that Michael Arlen

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was coming that day to lunch and I thought I might as well see him again. Michael was totally unaware that he was lunching with a practical corpse, and when I suggested a walk afterwards to the cemetery acquiesced like a bland schoolboy. On the way he said, "You know, half the writers in the world are envying you your luck in having a book suppressed". It might have salved me in the week previous but I was beyond salving. My mind had settled my choice of lady from whom I intended to hear the last personal words addressed to me by a human being. After a little idle talk at the tomb of Marie Bashkirtseff I shook hands with Michael, as I thought, forever, and set out to pay my last call.

I had left one of my sepulchral intimations on this lady a week previously. When she saw me, she immediately cancelled an engagement and drove me into a remote part of Paris, where I found a family of occult Platonists waiting. I sat in their circle and listened to their astral conversation. There were no crystal balls or astrolabes. I was impressed and soothed by the elder, or Mage, in his black cap. He saw the shadow upon me and discussed suicide so softly and so gently that I refrained from insisting on my necessity and decision. My mind was too raw even for oil. At the end he said: "You know it is wrong for your soul and you will not kill yourself". But it was no longer an open question and I remained silent.

When we returned, the lady, an American married into one country and living in another, very quietly said: "You know that Paris has read your book and finds it dull, but not indecent".

For the first time for weeks I burst into laughter and I do not think I ever heard sweeter words. I repeated them again and again like a thirsty man drinking at an oasis. "Dull but not indecent! Dull but not indecent!" I hugged myself and the chill cleared away from my brain. My mind felt as though it was once more wrapped in a blanket. I knelt and kissed the hem of her dress and I returned to her house for dinner. I still felt as though I was in a dream. I sat through a worldly dinner party, at which the dressings of the ladies and of the cook vied for men's attention. At the end my hostess whispered: "Be at ease. Not a person here has heard about you or your old book".

"Well, I'm bothered if I am going to commit suicide to catch their attention," was my reply. I was laughing once more, for the icy ache in my mind was gone. I lay back in my mind and lifted quilts and cushions upon it, until it felt warm and normal again.

I was miles from suicide, but that, at least, is what I had felt. Suicide is the result of a mood. Men can be reduced to an agony which demands annihilation. I do not think it is their fault if they sink into that mood. It is impossible to struggle against the mood while it lasts. It is only possible to mark time, but if they mark time for a week or a day or a month relief may come; but it has to come from the outside. There is no resource left within. The soul nakedly and frozenly awaits the line of least resistance to stumble by into death. But tide over bad days and relief may come, to some in the form of the money they desperately need, to others in the form of a friend or even in the shape of an accident. To me it came in the guise of the humor in which I had been so entirely deficient for a week.

"Dull but not indecent!" — I walked home along the Quays singing and shouting those splendid words until the tears rolled down my haggard cheeks. I made up my mind to live and to write future books under that inspiring motto. I hope that in time I shall deserve it as the motto over my tomb:

HERE LIES AN AUTHOR FALLEN IN HIS RUTS; DULL BUT NOT INDECENT; HAD NO GUTS.

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# A BOOKMAN'S NOTES

## GHOST WRITING

IT was Mr. W. O. McGeehan, the sports oracle of The Herald Tribune, who first called attention to the miracle performed by Babe Ruth beside which the Babe's home run record is merely a clever demonstration of skill. The fans, wrote Mr. McGeehan, have been honoring the Sultan of Swat for knocking the ball out of the yard with incredibly high frequency, whereas they should be worshipping him for performing prodigies the like of which have never been known outside the New Testament. In his capacity as a baseball reporter, the Babe once achieved the supernatural feat of writing a brilliant eye-witness account of a baseball game for The New York World while lying unconscious in hospital nearly a thousand miles away from the game.

Mr. Louis Angel Firpo also has abilities, according to Mr. McGeehan, that are more worthy of respect than that muscular power of his which sent Mr. Jack Dempsey kiting through the ropes at the old Madison Square Garden into the lap of an astonished sports recorder. The Wild Bull of the Pampas, it seems, knew not a word of spoken English except the more unprintable expletives and exclamations; and even the instructions of the referee, short and simple though they were, had to be translated for him. Yet, so fluent became his command of written English ten minutes after he had been flattened on the canvas by Mr. Dempsey, that he was able to write for American newspapers more than a thousand words of his personal impressions of the battle in an Americanese which any student in the sports section of a school of journalism might do well to emulate.

Mr. McGeehan, of course, wrote in irony. He knew, as well as you and I, that Babe Ruth does not write the stuff he signs, and that Louis Angel Firpo probably could not write a literate letter in his native language, let alone a good journalistic account of a prizefight in English. What is really interesting is the fact that Mr. McGeehan troubles himself over such minor and obvious duplicities. A chronicler of professional sports, Mr. McGeehan is always at war with the meretricious features of the athletics he writes about. It pained him greatly that Mr. "Red" Grange, the flying phantom of the Illini, did not decline Mr. Pyle's offer to make him a millionaire and go back to delivering ice in Wheaton and take his degree at college. By not following Mr. McGeehan's advice, Mr. Grange is solvent against the fickle caprice of public favor and certainly he is as well remembered and as affectionately as he would have been if he had not gone professional. Where are the football heroes of yesteryear? Where are Brickley and Ted Coy? If Mr. Grange had taken his degree, I should like to have had him run down to Wall Street and see how much he could get on it. Indeed, I should like to know what course McGeehan would have taken if Mr. Grange, out of college and out of a job had shown up at the Herald Tribune office and said:

"Mr. McGeehan if it had not been for you I would have listened to the blandishments of Mr. Pyle and have gone without my degree and had some filthy lucre in a bank. As it is I have sacrificed cash for dear old Illinois and I have majored in English and got a very fair report for myself. I have a desire to succeed as a writer like you. You have been a constant inspiration to me. I have thought that possibly you could give me something to do around the office here so that I could prove my abilities in the writing line and work up. I am willing to start in at the bottom and I am ready to do anything in order to get a start. Money is no object with me, because I can live cheaply, having



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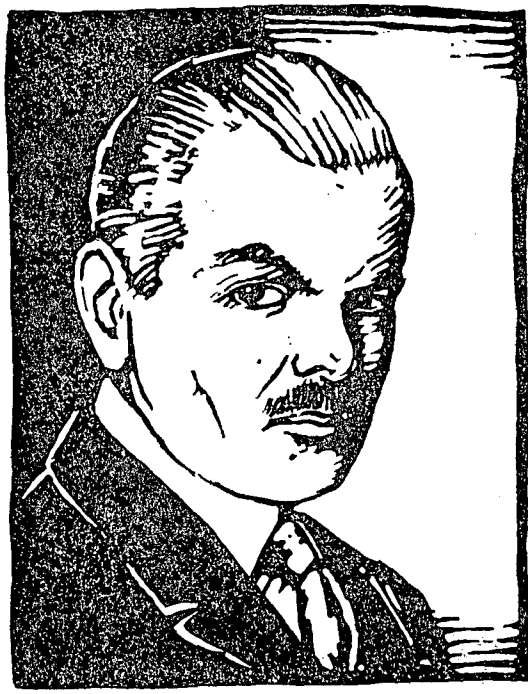

*Charles G. Norris*

no wife and family to support, and I do feel the need of that inspiration which only you can give in the matter of idealism in sports."

If I know anything about Mr. McGeehan's job and the jobs I have had during the past fifteen years, Mr. McGeehan's reply would have been: "I am very sorry; but we have a full staff in the sports department right now and there are not likely to be any vacancies at least for a while. Will you give me your name and address and telephone number? If anything comes up here, I will get in touch with you, and I will keep an eye open for anything that might interest you. Thank you! I am very glad to have met you, sir! If I hear of anything I will give you a ring".

When Mr. McGeehan was becoming sarcastic over the practical sense of Mr. Grange, he was citing in contrast the pure love-for-the-game spirit of Miss Gertrude Ederle, whom he had just watched in training for her English Channel swim. Here was a woman, the hope of the race, he said in effect, who without ostentation was preparing for an endurance test at which representative male swimmers from all nations had failed to make good. He was counting on her to win, and moreover he was counting on her to rest upon her achievement, and not to capitalize it with a sacrifice of her amateur standing. Mr. McGeehan was right in one item of his prediction: Miss Ederle swam the channel. But she did quite handsomely by her vaudeville and movie contracts; and, so fickle is Fame, many who had wept with joy at her feat laughed with Mr. F. P. A. when he made fun of her cablegram of congratulation to Charles A. Lindbergh. They would have laughed just the same if she had been an amateur, happy though broke.

Mr. McGeehan's last hope failed him — Suzanne Lenglen. She too turned professional right when Mr. McGeehan was assuring everybody that she never would. She did it for her aged father, somewhat as Mr. Benny Leonard quit the cauliflower industry out of deference to his mother's wishes. And both Mr. Leonard and Mlle Lenglen invaded Mr. McGeehan's field as professional commentators on sports. Whether their articles were prepared by "ghosts" I don't know; but I have suspicions.

"Ghost" writing is a fairly ancient profession. It is quite possible that the Commentaries on the Gallic and Civil Wars, which were signed by Julius Caesar, were among the early — though by no means the first — examples of trading upon a name that had distinguished itself in other than literary fields. Suetonius attributes the chapters on the Alexandrine war in Caesar's "*De Bello Civili*" to A. Hirtius and many scholars have agreed that his surmise is correct. Niebuhr "without hesitation" attributes to C. Oppius the book signed by Caesar on the African war; and so crude and uneducated is language in the book on the Spanish war that it is assumed to be not by Caesar or Hirtius or Oppius but by some untalented re-write man working from a diary kept by a combatant during the war.

Scholars are generally of the opinion that the first seven books of the Gallic war and the first three books of the Civil war are the work of Caesar himself. But Caesar dictated to an amanuensis, or rather, it is said, to several at once. An amanuensis

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was something more than a stenographer or private secretary: he was an educated man, schooled in rhetoric, and chosen for his literary abilities as well as for his skill with the *calamus*. It is quite possible that one of these amanuenses polished up the Commentaries and thus became Caesar's "ghost". The famous "*Veni, vidi, vici*" was probably the inspiration of some journalist in Caesar's employ, just as the "Pericardis alive or Raisuli dead" was the inspiration of an Associated Press correspondent and not T. R.'s, and just as "Lafayette, we are here!" was a good line that occurred to a newspaper man but not to General Pershing.

The Saturday Evening Post and The New York Daily Graphic have sought to recognize the part played by collaborators in those memoirs of people who have distinguished themselves in opera, the prize ring, safe-blowing or murder rather than in the field of literary endeavor. The Saturday Evening Post publishes the by-line in large type, supplemented by a line in smaller type which reads: "In collaboration with So-and-so". The Graphic runs articles signed in large letters, "By Ruth Snyder" or "By Gerald Chapman", and beneath, in smaller type, a line saying "As told to So-and-so".

But "ghost" writing in its unadulterated state flourishes now as probably it never flourished before. The great public will read an article signed by Babe Ruth, Benny Leonard, Jack Dempsey, Lina Cavalieri, the Prince of Wales or Queen Marie of Roumania with greater gusto than it would give to an article signed by an unfamiliar name. In many instances "ghost" writing is a true collaboration. A trained journalist asks a few questions or listens to a recital and later composes an article in the first person to which the famous person signs his or her name. The sentiments are the famous person's, even though the language and the sequence of ideas are not precisely his or hers.

Some of the "ghost" writers are:

Ford Frick of the New York Evening Journal who writes the articles signed by Babe Ruth.

Jack Lait who wrote Ruth Snyder's story of her life.

Carlisle Macdonald who collaborated with Col. Charles A. Lindbergh in the preparation of Col. Lindbergh's newspaper articles.

Zoë Beckley who wrote the articles signed by Queen Marie of Roumania.

Mary Margaret McBride who writes down and elaborates the ideas and memories of Paul Whiteman.

Clark Kinnaird who wrote one "autobiography" of Aimee Semple McPherson.

Frank Menke who writes the articles signed by Jack Dempsey.

Samuel Crowther who wrote the life stories of John H. Patterson and Henry Ford.

Beatrice Fairfax is a trade name owned by William Randolph Hearst. It has been employed by a number of writers on Mr. Hearst's staff. The beauty articles signed by Madame Helena Rubinstein are prepared by Mrs. L. Z. Guck.

Wesley Stout is a "ghost" writer on the staff of The Saturday Evening Post. Antoinette Donnelly, after serving as a "ghost" for the late Lillian Russell as a writer on the care of the complexion and other subjects of beauty, now has her own name copyrighted as an authority on such secrets.

Arthur ("Bugs") Baer, Hugh Fullerton, Damon Runyon, and Miss Hazel Canning have all done "ghost" writing. Miss Canning has to her credit the autobiographies of such personages as the late Jancsi Rigo, the Gypsy Violinist, who married the Princess Chimay and of Mrs. Jean Nash, "the best dressed woman in the world".

It will be recalled that Mark Twain was the "ghost" who prepared the autobiography of General Grant.

An amusing angle of "ghost writing" was revealed when Edwin L. Meyer threatened suit against Samuel Goldwyn, the movie magnate. Meyer alleged that he had been engaged by Mr. Goldwyn to write Mr. Goldwyn's autobiography but that the job had been taken out of his hands and turned over to Miss Corinne Lowe.

* * *

## FOR A BOOK OF MEMOIRS

AMONG the books which appeared during the fall of 1922 there was one now already pretty much forgotten, though it is

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of considerable importance in the cultural history of our country. It was a book that aroused a great deal of critical animosity, much to the delight of its perpetrators. If it had been reviewed favorably or received amiably, its authors would have been exceedingly disappointed, for the aim of the book was to stir people up.

The book was called "Civilization in the United States: An Inquiry by Thirty Americans". The title itself was sarcastic, for the essays in the symposium set out to prove that if the United States could boast of any civilization at all it was of the most rudimentary and unsatisfactory character. The editor, Mr. Harold Stearns, made the deliberate mistake in his preface of referring to his collaborators and himself as "intellectuals", knowing full well that what the average citizen in a political democracy resents as much as anything else in the world is the assumption of superiority on the part of others, and that to call oneself an intellectual is to take on airs which the conscious democrat, burdened with a sense of personal inadequacy, finds it hard to tolerate. Mr. Stearns and his collaborators omitted no details which occurred to them as possible factors in provoking hostility and, in calling themselves "intellectuals", they knew they could count on plenty of paragraphs from columnists and editorial writers.

The first I heard of the book was from George Jean Nathan who described it to me as the latest "buffoonery" he and H. L. Mencken were engaged in. During those days Mencken and Nathan were so much occupied with intellectual horseplay that I doubt whether either of them knew when he was serious and when he was just fooling.

"We've got enough professors and New Republicans among the list of contributors," said Nathan, "to put the thing over as a bona fide work of critical indignation. The plan is to get out the meat-ax for everything the American boobery holds sacred — the schools, politics, the home, literature, the theater, big business, the small towns, the newspapers, the movies and all the rest. Nobody will escape. The reviews of the book when it comes out ought to be gorgeously entertaining."

The book was not Nathan's and Mencken's idea, however. The scheme of the book was evolved over a table in Greenwich Village one evening when, among a group of young writers, a common discontent with things as they are in this worst of all possible worlds was crystallized into a flaming resentment against the fact that alcoholic beverages had been made expensive and difficult to obtain by the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution. Young, sanguine and exuberant, for all their intellectualism, they resented a rigid chaperonage of their conduct by a finicky and puritanical government and, chafing under the yoke of a tyranny as yet only theoretical (for they had not been put to much inconvenience, really, to get what they wanted to drink) they enlisted in the service of abstract justice by demanding for all people the privilege they themselves enjoyed under the outlaw beneficence of bootlegging.

Once the plan of the book was outlined and a number of writers were told off to cover some of the various subjects, fortnightly meetings were called in the comfortless basement of Stearns' rickety house in Barrow street. One reached the place by elbowing one's way through a swarm of Italian children and climbed a wooden stoop, which shook as though it were falling to pieces. After pushing a door-bell which did not work and pulling a bell-cord which had no bell attached to it, one finally hammered on the door until the noise would rise above the yelling of the children in the street and penetrate to Stearns' hearing on the top floor. Then Stearns would come down and usher one up to a study littered with cigarette stubs, burnt matches, candle grease, papers and books. Stearns had always a preoccupied air and the look of a bewildered small child in need of protection against the rough usages of life, so one felt as though one had rather eat one's hat and stick than suggest that he trouble himself to tell where one might lay them. There was a low, broad bed, but it was one of the few places to sit; there were no jutting nails or hatracks; and in discouragement one finally dropped one's hat in the dust of a corner or turned out a gas jet in the hall and hung it there.

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When the collaborators were assembled Stearns led the way to the basement which served him as a dining-room and kitchen and where there were some tables and chairs on which to sit. John Macy, a gaunt, literary looking person with steel-gray hair, dressed in white linen and wearing a flowing black Windsor tie, was there to write the article on newspapers. Lewis Mumford, who was to tell what was wrong with the American cities, usually came in after a hike in the country — a hulking fellow dressed like a mining prospector in the movies. Walter Pach, the artist and critic, a grave and quiet man with an overhanging mustache, then engaged in translating Elie Faure's "History of Art"; Paul Rosenfeld, a rosy and globular little fellow with a merry countenance and a blond toothbrush mustache; Ernest Boyd, dressed from head to toe in brown to match the rust-colored beard which gives him the appearance of the traditional portraits of the Christus; J. E. Spingarn, clothed in severe good taste, a tall, darkish man, like the hero of a novel by E. P. Roe; Van Wyck Brooks, neat, sharp-nosed, nervously diffident, bowing from the waist with a mechanical precision and stiffness; Hendrik Willem Van Loon, huge, fattish, urbane and with a monocle; Katherine Anthony in sombre black; Deems Taylor, looking like a mischievous small boy; and perhaps a half-dozen others would range themselves about the room.

Ostensibly these meetings were held for the discussion of the book, but very little of anything was ever discussed, beyond what was the most suitable title and who was to handle the subjects which were not yet assigned. Every one was eager for the trifling routine to be done with and the real business of the evening — a party at some one's place — to get started. The whole thing was a lark; there was no evidence of that zealousness which is supposed to characterize meetings of this sort. Now and then part of one of the essays that had already come in would be read aloud amid chuckles of approval and amused speculations as to how it would be greeted in certain quarters. Nevertheless, for all the apparent lack of dignity and high seriousness, these essays were

*Robert Wolf, sketched at The Dome, Paris, by Adolf Dehn*

prepared with care and sincerity; they were stringently critical but accurately and poignantly so; they were well documented, most of them, even when they contained wide generalizations. The book was a manifestation of a tendency then in the air, a tendency to challenge the existing order of things, to examine our customs, and institutions with a critical eye, and to shake up the American complacency. It was a tendency which gave us "Main Street" and "Babbitt", "Miss Lulu Bett" and a great number of other books of fiction and of essays. The editor of "Civilization in the United States" anticipated the question demanding why, if he disliked the country so much, he did not get out, by sailing for France several months before the book was off the press; and he has not yet returned.

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## CABELLIANA

IN the preface to the Storisende Edition of "The Silver Stallion", James Branch Cabell tells how heaven protected that book from destruction. Cabell does his own typing and takes no carbons, because he says that no one can decipher his handwriting and seven times out of ten he inserts the carbon paper wrong side up. When his manuscript is ready for the printer, it is the one and only copy, complete with revisions.

He mailed the manuscript at Dumbarton. The express trains do not stop at the station there. The mail-bag is hung upon a kind of gibbet from which it is caught by a steel arm projecting from the mail car as the train rushes by. The mail-bag in which the manuscript of "The Silver Stallion" was deposited was caught low by the steel arm and ripped open. The only piece of mail that fell out was Cabell's manuscript. It lay in the ditch for thirty-six hours before being discovered. And during that time, Cabell records, rain was miraculously withheld and the manuscript preserved from destruction.

* * *

Readers of "The Cream of the Jest" will recall how Felix Kennaston found the top of his wife's discarded cold cream jar serviceable as the Sigil of Scoteia. It is quite apparent that, although Cabell brings conscious effort to bear upon the revisions and elaborations of his tales, his work is, probably more than that of any other contemporary American writer, the outpouring of a rich subconscious, in which are stored the memories of prodigious reading. It also would appear that Cabell employs a form of crystal-gazing to set his subsconcious free. At all events he lets his imagination play upon very homely objects until they become in his mind the paraphernalia of magic. The curious will find in Chapter 46 of "Something About Eve" allusions to the various things that have served him as representatives of something more romantic and recondite — a porcelain box of ointment, a great saw, a blue hat, a large iron comb, a palm branch, and two enormous, rusty keys marked with the monogram S. P.

The idea for "Figures of Earth" came to him one spring afternoon in May 1919 when he looked out of the windows of his study and saw his wife and child returning to the house. He writes that he "reflected that it would be, upon every personal ground, regrettable if, as the moving window unclosed, that especial woman and that particular child proved to be figures in the glass and the window opened upon nothingness. For that, I believed, was about to happen. . . . Well! there was not. I once more enjoyed the quite familiar experience of being mistaken. It is gratifying to record that nothing whatever came of that panic surmise, or that second-long nightmare — of that brief but over-tropical flowering, for all I know of indigestion — save, ultimately, the 80,000 words or so of this book".

Cabell had learned about the existence of Dom Manuel only from his early romances and had read about his death in the fourth chapter of "Jurgen". He had, then, to write a book about Manuel and he had the germ of it in that instant when "Dom Manuel opens the over-familiar window, in his own home, to see his wife and child, and all the Poictesme of which he was at once the master and the main glory, presented as bright, shallow, very fondly loved illusions in the protective glass of Ageus."

* * *

For those whose minds work that way, there is amusement to be derived out of discovering the anagrams in Cabell's work. As suggestions it might be pointed out that in the new novel, "Something About Eve", Caer Omn is an anagram for Romance; Doonham for Manhood; Lytreia for Reality; Turoine for Routine; and the Land of Dersam, of course, is the Land of Dreams.

There are a number of anagrams in "Jurgen", as there are in his other books; but one of them is an anagram which probably did not occur to him as being an anagram. Anaïtis is an anagram for Insatia; but it is on record that while looking for a name under which Aphrodite appears as a goddess of love in the myths of other languages beside the Greek, he was captivated by the umlaut in Anaïtis, who was the Aphrodite of Armenian folklore, and so chose it.

B. R.

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## THIRTY YEARS AGO THIS MONTH IN THE BOOKMAN

THE six best sellers for the month were: "The Choir Invisible" by James Lane Allen; "Quo Vadis" by Henry Sienkiewicz; "The Christian" by Hall Caine; "Jerome" by Mary E. Wilkins; "Chevalier d'Auriac" by S. Levett Yeats; and "Soldiers of Fortune" by Richard Harding Davis.

The leading reviews were devoted to: "Hugh Wynne" by S. Weir Mitchell; "Jerome" by Mary E. Wilkins; "Ballads of Lost Haven" by Bliss Carman; "Aglavaine and Selysette" by Maurice Maeterlinck; "The Secret Rose" by W. B. Yeats; "The Story of the Indian" by George Bird Grinnell; "A Survey of Greek Civilization" by J. O. Mahaffy; and "Peter the Great" by K. Waliskewski.

"As lectures, Professor Mahaffy's remarks must have been very bright and interesting to listen to, and he is often really instructive, but, on the whole, when read in the study, what he has to say seems somewhat thin and unsubstantial." — From a review of "A Survey of Greek Civilization" by T. E. P.

"M. Maeterlinck has found a philosophy in his search for the quintessence, the philosophy of his beautiful *Trêsor des Humbles*, and he would have his persons speak out of its wisdom. It will make his plays more beautiful in time, for the serious fault of his best plays, even of *Les Aveugles* and *L'Intruse*, is that they have not the crowning glory of great plays, that continual raving about destiny that is, as it were, the raiment of beautiful emotions. Its immediate effect is mischievous, for Meleander and Aglavaine, his most prominent persons, continually say things which they would say differently or not at all if their creator were only thinking of them as persons in a play." — From a review of "Aglavaine and Selysette", by W. B. Yeats.

* * *

## FIFTEEN YEARS AGO THIS MONTH IN THE BOOKMAN

"NEW York shares with other cities a liking for such writers as Edith Wharton, Robert Herrick, Jeffrey Farnol, Winston Churchill, Hopkinson Smith, David Graham Phillips, and Richard Harding Davis, whose books appeal more strongly to the sophisticated tastes of the big town, rather than to the readers in small cities or rural districts." — Grace Isabel Colbron in an article entitled, "The Reading Zones of the United States".

The best sellers for the month were: "The Street Called Straight", Anonymous; "The Melting of Molly" by Daviess; "The Red Lane" by Day; "The Harvester" by Stratton-Porter; "The Just and the Unjust" by Kester; and "To M. L. G.", Anonymous.

*From the jacket of "Rustic Elegies", published by Knopf*

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ONE of the pleasures of acquiring a magazine is that of being able, without recourse to the public library, to browse at will among the early numbers. The bound volumes of THE BOOKMAN, running back more than thirty-seven years, present a fascinating chronicle of the literary life of two generations. It is difficult, we find, to concentrate on the more onerous aspects of running a magazine with these volumes but a few feet away.

Some of our discoveries in these antiquarian researches among the old files of THE BOOKMAN we reproduce on the opposite page.

The picture of Mr. Cabell is a reproduction of a snapshot taken in 1913. He had just published "The Soul of Melicent". The lovely portrait of Miss Glasgow was taken in 1897 at about the time that it became known that she was the author of the highly praised anonymous novel, "The Descendant". The studious looking portrait of Mr. Ade was made in 1905 after he had become famous not only as the author of "Fables in Slang" but as the author of "The College Widow". The portrait of Mr. Dixon shows him at the height of the success of "The Leopard's Spots". The dreamy-looking and ministerial portrait of Mr. Tarkington was taken when he had published "Monsieur Beaucaire" in 1900. We wrote to the late James Oliver Curwood for the original photograph reproduced on the opposite page shortly before his death. In sending the picture to us he said he was also inclosing a recent profile photograph "which you might want to use in case I die". The earlier photograph was taken in 1903 when he was editor of the Sunday Illustrated section of the Detroit News Tribune. When the photograph of Mr. Hapgood was taken in 1901, he was dramatic critic for THE BOOKMAN. The photograph of Mr. Dreiser with the very literary pose appeared in THE BOOKMAN in the issue for April 1907. The caption under the picture read: "Mr. Dreiser's 'Sister Carrie' has been pronounced by many eminent critics an extraordinary novel. It was first issued five or six years ago, but for some mysterious reason was so quickly withdrawn that the reading public had no chance to judge it. Consequently its forthcoming appearance will be, to all practical purposes, a first publication. Among those who expressed high admiration for the book were Hamlin Garland and Frank Norris".



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# PREY

## By Liam O'Flaherty

ON a Spring morning an old ass was lying on the roadside near a small cottage. He had a grey hide, from which the hair had fallen in many places, leaving brown patches that were glossy with wear and scarred by blows. On his legs there were deep rings, where tethering ropes had eaten into his flesh during years of servitude. His large ears drooped. Lying on his side with his ears thrust out, his belly heaved violently with each slow, raucous breath. His head was erect but his nostrils almost touched the road. His hot breath poured out on the road and turned into smoke.

Melted snow lay on the road, and here and there was a little crisp flake of melting ice, and the sun was shining brilliantly; for it was a Spring morning and the sun was melting the snow and ice of winter. The road shone. The earth glistened. Birds sang. The air was sharp and penetrating. But everything rejoiced in the cold splendor of the sun-kissed air, except the old ass that lay on the road, breathing slowly.

A dog came out of the cottage. He raised his tail, barked and rushed at the ass. He stopped near the ass and barked, scratching the road. The ass made a rumbling sound in his throat, a groan. Lowering his head and shaking his ears, he got to his feet. He moved slowly up the road, upwards towards the mountains. The dog followed him, barking. An old man came out of the cottage. He waved his stick and urged on the dog to pursue the ass. That old ass had come up the road last winter and hung around the cottage, trying to rummage food. Nobody seemed to own that ass. Somebody had driven off the useless old tramp and it was a nuisance having him around there, trying to steal food.

"Hulla! Hulla!" said the old man. "Sick him, Tiger."

The dog barked. The ass ambled upwards, knocking his forelegs together. He turned around a bend of the road and paused. The dog followed. When the dog turned the corner he stopped barking and stood still. He lowered his tail and began to smell the air in a curious fashion. When the ass saw him do that he shook his head; a gesture of warning. But he did not attack the dog. He set off again, walking slowly upwards and looking behind him sideways at the dog. The dog now had his tail between his legs. He was yawning and licking his jaws. He kept looking behind him cautiously at the cottage. He also kept looking at the ass, slyly, with his snout thrust out. The ass, more hurriedly, but with great labor, rounded another corner. Then the dog, going even more slowly than the ass, followed with his snout to the ground. He sniffed the ground and thrust out each foot, slowly and noiselessly. He looked from side to side cautiously and in his eyes there was a wild expression.

Suddenly the old man at the cottage whistled. The dog started and ran back with his tail under his belly. Once he halted and smelt the road upwards, where the ass had gone. Then he crawled up to the old man, wagging his tail and dragging himself along the ground on his belly. The old man beat him and spat.

The ass walked upwards until he came to a place where water gushed from a steep bank on the roadside. He put his snout to the white purling fountain of water. He snorted three times. Then he shook himself and tried to drink. It seemed that the water was not to his taste. He shook himself again, lowered his head and moved upwards. He came to the summit of the hill.

Ahead, the white road ran straight across a level moor. There were no houses there. On either side of the moor little winding paths ran into the moorland. Sheep grazed on the moorland. There were little hills. There were bushes. On the left, in the dis-



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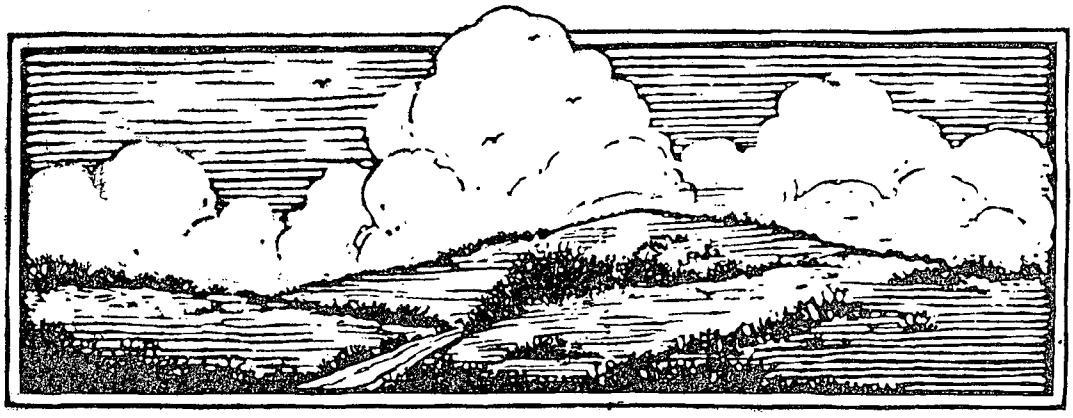

tance, there was a copse of trees, on the edge of the moor. There was a fence around the trees. The ass looked at everything. Then he walked off the road onto the wet grass. He smelt the grass. Then he turned around three times, groaned, and lay on the grass. He lay on his side. He stretched out his legs as before. His snout almost touched the ground and his hot breath poured forth on the grass and turned into smoke.

Two crows came flying over him. They saw him lying on his side with his legs thrust out. They cawed and wheeled around above in the sky. They kept cawing. He heard them and groaned. He got to his feet slowly and moved on, away from the road, through the moor. The two crows alighted on a bush and watched him.

Soon his grey figure, moving slowly among the grey moorland hillocks, became almost invisible. He halted in many places and looked about him. But there were several crows following him at a distance. They no longer cawed. Only when they lost sight of him did they caw. And again when they caught sight of him they became silent. Dropping their feet and drooping their wings, they let themselves fall slowly, alighting on some small eminence, at a distance from him. He kept moving on and they followed him.

Once he came upon a moorland lake, between low hills. There was a crane standing there among the rushes. The crane rose languidly, without crying out, and flew slowly towards him. It passed over him, looking down intently. It wheeled at a distance and flew back over him, watching intently. It circled the lake and alighted in the same place among the rushes. It began again to look into the water, paying no heed to the ass. The ass moved away, followed by the crows and by a few other strange birds that soared high up in the sky. Now there was a great flock of crows. Some followed. Others went in front. Others fluttered about on either side. He was surrounded on all sides by these black croaking birds.

No matter how he twisted about among the low hills or sheltered beneath bushes, they found him again. Evening came.

The ass came into a little dell that was densely covered by a growth of bushes, briars and gorse. It was a good place, sheltered, quiet. It was inaccessible. There was silence there. It was quite dark. He pushed his way into the centre of it and stood beneath a bush. It was very quiet there. The pursuing birds cawed loudly, at a distance, overhead, on either side. They flew about wildly, cawing. The ass lay down, with his legs to the bush and his head raised against an anthill. He lay still. Tremors passed along his hide, at first gently, then violently. He began to wheeze. The wheeze became a rattling sound. It was very quiet in the dell, beneath the thick growth. It was very dark too. There was perfect peace there. It was a pleasant place to sleep. His hoofs began to tap against the up-lying roots of the bush.

One large bird swooped low over the dell. Passing slowly over the tops of the bushes, it saw the ass lying there beneath, on his side, with his legs thrust out. The bird arose at

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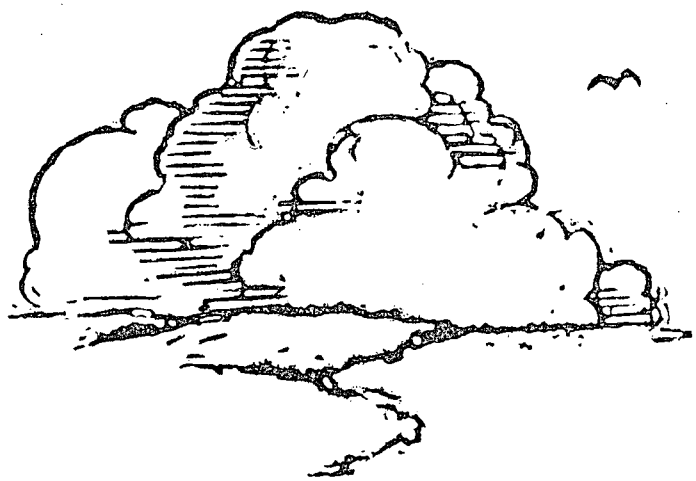
once, turned around in its flight and cawed querulously. All the birds became still. They all alighted on the ground, round about. They walked to and fro. They prodded the earth. They whetted their beaks.

The ass groaned aloud, stretched out full length, kicked furiously with his hind legs and raised his head. He shivered from head to foot. His head dropped with a thud. His body became still.

With a rustling sound, a hare darted out from the brambles near the ass and fled away, away to the moor. Several other little animals dashed away from the dell and hid themselves in holes. A tiny bird which had come up with something in its beak alighted on a branch near the ass. It bobbed its head. Another little bird alighted beside it, also carrying something in its beak. They both bobbed their heads. Then they both flew away, away, bobbing up and down.

A crow sprang into the air and wheeled around the dell many times, coming lower and lower. It alighted on the bush above the ass. It preened its feathers. Then it looked down. Without a sound, it let itself fall onto the ass's back. All the birds arose and wheeled round and round the dell.

Later, dogs came and drove away the birds.



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# ONE WHO KNEW POE

## By Vincent Starrett

IN the late autumn of the year 1833, in the city of Baltimore, a morose young man, stricken with poverty and genius, won a cash prize of fifty dollars for a tale that is today one of the short-story masterpieces of the nation's literature. The young man was Edgar Allan Poe: the story was that known as "A Manuscript Found in a Bottle".

The prize had been offered by an ephemeral newspaper, The Saturday Visiter, for the best original story submitted, and a second prize of twenty-five dollars had been offered for the best poem. The melancholy young man also submitted a poem that was adjudged the best in its class, but inasmuch as he had won the prize for prose the judges awarded the poetry money to another young man, whose contribution was thought to rank only a little behind that of Poe. The second young man was John Hill Hewitt, the subject of this paper, whose obscurity today is perhaps as deep as the fame of Poe is high.

Poe's poem was titled "The Coliseum", and is to be found in any edition of his poetical works; Hewitt's was called "The Song of the Wind", and it has all but vanished from the earth. Neither poem, it may be asserted, would win even an honorable mention in the year 1927. Poe's award was turned over to him in cash, a commodity of which he stood in great need, but Hewitt, not then in the unhappy circumstances of his principal competitor — he was, in point of fact, an editor of the journal that offered the prizes, and entered the contest under an assumed name — preferred a silver goblet, which was accordingly purchased and engraved, and duly presented to the man, one of whose principal distinctions thereafter was to be that once he had defeated Edgar Allan Poe in a poetry contest.

Nearly a century now has passed since that day in 1833 which saw the award of Poe's fifty dollars and Hewitt's silver cup. Poe is now called the greatest genius of American letters. Hewitt is about as completely forgotten as it is possible for a poet to be. This is more or less as it should be, no doubt. Poe was an inspired and romantic figure, destined for the heights. Hewitt was a man of slight talent, uninspired but versatile, and foredoomed to obscurity. Yet, for a time, the latter poet was a highly popular figure in the literary circles of the South, and was called the "father of the American ballad". The title was a loose one, not exactly deserved. There had been balladists in America before Hewitt, many of them. In the days of the Revolution, there was Hopkinson, to mention only one; and in Hewitt's own day there were ballad mongers in number. But Hewitt won the title — probably from a reckless press — and clung to it. He was a composer as well as a poet, and in his time composed the music for more than three hundred popular songs, for many of which he also wrote the words. The number of his occasional poems, without music, must have been enormous, and they were of every sort, from the sentimental and moral ballad to the rhymed comic dialogues of stage Irishmen, heavy with brogue.

Hewitt, in fact, wrote about anything and everything: the wonders of Nature, the laying of a corner-stone, the creation of Man, the September term of the Grand Jury, a flood in Tennessee, the starry flag, age, death, divorce, Queen Victoria, the fall of Khartoum, love, hope, music, and whatever popped into his head or entered his mind by way of the daily papers. He was a topical poet comparable in all respects to the syndicate poets of our own day, and was never at a loss for a subject. He wrote fluently in the primer metres and ran strongly to conventional rhymes. His Muse unquestionably was pedestrian. All of which, of course, had something to do with his wide appeal to that section of the reading public known as the masses. His was a day of sentimental



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balladry, and the best poets of the time, saving Poe, were no geniuses. The age is chiefly remembered — in literature — for its outstanding masterpieces, such songs as "The Old Oaken Bucket", "Woodman, Spare that Tree", and "Backward, Turn Backward, O Time in Thy Flight". Hewitt wrote songs as good, or as bad, as any, but no one of them ever happened to catch the public fancy as did the three mentioned, and so no one of them survives.

In the course of certain Poe investigations it has been my fortune to discover the surviving member of Hewitt's immediate family; to look over the more interesting parts of his manuscript "Journal", and to explore a scrapbook of his writings. The effort has added considerably to my knowledge of Poe; and it has caused to re-live for me the curious and not uninteresting individual who might, had he been so minded, have been Poe's friend and intimate, and have left to posterity a first-hand picture of that strange genius somewhat more trustworthy than the rapt accounts of many another. Hewitt was, however, "respectable"; he disliked Poe, and Poe disliked him, and so — unwitting — the lesser poet foreswore the opportunity that was his, heartily to shake hands with immortality, and went his way to the limbo of forgotten rhymesters. Yet his own life, read in retrospect, has a certain old-fashioned interest.

Hewitt lived in a vivid day and in a vivid city. His father, a violinist of some note, was born in England and came to America in 1795 to become director of the Park Theatre, in New York City; his mother, a daughter of Sir John King, an English baronet, had lived in Paris during the French revolution, had been confined in the Bastille — for safety — by order of Robespierre, had become acquainted with Napoleon Bonaparte, then a young officer in the republican army, and had witnessed many bloody scenes about the guillotine. The poet, the second of seven children, was born in New York City, on July 11, 1801, and lived in Baltimore for more than two generations. He was educated at West Point, graduating in the class of 1822, nearly a decade before Poe's unhappy experience at the same institution. Hewitt did not enter the army, however. He resigned and removed to Augusta, Georgia, after a dispute with the superintendent of the military academy, and there he adopted music as a profession and studied law upon the side. He was for a time instructor in music in a young ladies' academy at Greenville, South Carolina, and in that city also he founded and edited a newspaper. He located in Baltimore in 1825 and became at once a prolific writer for the periodical press, a writer of popular songs and unsuccessful operas, and in the end a somewhat frayed teacher of music and a landmark of the city.

Hewitt's recollections of the men and women of his time contain a great many anecdotes, most of them dull enough, but his brief and sometimes acid descriptions of the individuals themselves are entertaining. Among the celebrities whom he met, or came to know, were William Lloyd Garrison, John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Robert Fulton, Samuel F. B. Morse, Col. David Crockett, and President Tyler. In the circles in which he habitually moved were Ann Royall, George P. Morris, author of "Woodman, Spare that Tree", T. S. Arthur, who wrote "Ten Nights in a Barroom", James R. Randall, author of "Maryland, my Maryland", F. Nicholls Crouch, composer of "Kathleen Mavourneen", Henry Russell, who wrote the music for "A Life on the Ocean Wave", and John T. Ford, in whose Washington theater, years later, President Lincoln was assassinated. And, of course, Edgar Allan Poe.

Of Garrison (in 1829), Hewitt writes: "He was a delicately small young man, stiff in his demeanor, and of rather a sanctified caste; though his religious sentiments were 'neither here nor there'. Nobody doubted his talents, but they were of a dangerous order. He was ambitious for a reputation, no matter how obtained, though many were of the opinion that the appearance of a halter made of Southern hemp would have frightened him out of his boots".

Of Mrs. Royall, he remarks that she was "one of the original strong-minded women of this country. She was not exactly a Joan of Arc or a Lucretia Borgia; but she was

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—Ann Royall, one of the corps editorial . . . a squatty, round-faced, sharpnosed, thin-lipped little woman, who claimed the proprietorship of a tongue which was tied in the middle and vibrated at both ends at once. . . . She sketched the lives and limned the features of members of Congress, executive officers, and such as paid her the price demanded, with a skill and grace peculiar to herself alone. If a gentleman, ambitious to appear in the front ground of a popular preferment, did not bleed freely, he was sure to have a deformed picture. . . . But he who was liberal and paid his subscription promptly in advance, was beautifully photographed and received the encouraging smiles of the bland widow of Lieut. Royall, deceased".

Hewitt, who declined to contribute to the lady, was referred to in a succeeding issue of her journal as the "monkey who edited The Baltimore Minerva".

The renowned Col. Davy Crockett, Hewitt writes, was a great humorist. "He was remarkably fond of music, but his idea of the classic hardly went beyond the 'Arkansaw Traveler' or 'Coony in a Hollow'. Lively airs or humorous Ethiopian melodies pleased him; but he could not abide what he called the 'scientific touches'. He compared the Italian school of singing to the howling of a wild-cat." Calhoun was worse off than Crockett, in this respect, asserts Hewitt. "He confessed he had no ear for music, that he could distinguish but one tune, and that was 'Yankee Doodle'; even that he had often tried to whistle, but as often failed in the effort."

There is also in the "Journal" an amusing story about Henry Clay and a livery-stable goat; and one learns that Mr. Clay was "in all probability the finest whist-player in the country".

Hewitt's relationships with Poe were not happy. Neither poet liked the other, even before the contest conducted by The Saturday Visiter. After the awards had been made known, the enmity deepened. From two of the judges, Poe learned the truth — that his poem had been preferred, but that it had seemed inadvisable to award both prizes to the same individual. Apparently without blaming the judges, Poe concentrated his anger upon Hewitt. The original cause of the greater man's dislike of the lesser was a review of Poe's volume of verse, "Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems", published at Baltimore in 1829, two years after the now famous first edition of "Tamerlane". Hewitt had written the review for The Minerva, another journal of the period, and had damned the volume with mighty little praise.

"This offhand and rather caustic review angered the young and aspiring poet," writes Hewitt, in his Journal, "and well it might. He attributed the article to Rufus Dawes, but on the denial of that gentleman afterwards strapped it on my shoulders, and up to the last time I met with him — in Washington — he evinced the bitterest dislike for me, a dislike which was heartily reciprocated, and which culminated in a personal assault." Later, the journalist writes: "The last time I saw Poe was in Washington; his appearance was anything but angelic. His features were bloated and haggard and he was the picture of 'un homme blasé'. I felt for him keenly; I could have wept for the wreck of genius that stood before me with his hand outstretched, as he hesitatingly saluted me with something like a mixture of pride and humility expressed on his rueful countenance. He said to me, 'I am in a bad plight in this grand city of great extensions. I think you as a brother poet will help me out, when I tell you that not a mouthful of food have I had for the past twenty-four hours'. I aided him in his distress to the best of my ability. We parted friends, but never met again".

It will be noted that Hewitt is not very consistent in those two paragraphs. He does not establish either the time of the personal assault — which elsewhere is asserted to have occurred in Baltimore — or the last meeting in Washington. And his tone is the smug tone that he uses at all times in referring to his relations with Poe, of whose indubitable greatness he was jealous, whether or not he realized it. It was a day of petty malice, and Poe was a popular scapegoat. It was the fashion for little men to spit on him. Hewitt never spits — in his "Journal" — but his holier-than-thou attitude is fre-

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quently more irritating than a heartier malice would be. "We parted friends," he asserts; but one may safely doubt it. It is more than likely, however, that he did relieve Poe's immediate need. What a hideous thing it must have been for Poe to have had to beg from Hewitt!

In an earlier sketch of Poe, Hewitt writes: "Edgar Allan Poe, who began to flourish about this time, was a thin, spare young man; pale featured, rather handsome, a fine eye, and high, intellectual forehead. He was a son of a Mr. Poe, at one time a lawyer practicing at the Baltimore bar; but who, having married an actress, became himself a treader of the boards. His parents dying in poverty, Edgar was taken charge of by one Mr. Allan, of Richmond, Va., a gentleman of wealth, who had him educated both in this country and in Europe. The boy displayed extraordinary talent, which began to develop itself at an early period; but the generous indulgence of his foster-father spoiled him, and his vicious habits were pandered to and nourished with a lavish hand. I feel it my duty here to draw a veil over Poe's career; and though I have been frequently called upon by book-wrights to state what I know of him, yet I have always been guarded in my language, and placed no reliance in common report. The poet and scholar having incurred the displeasure of his benefactor, was cast out upon the world to seek a living as best he could. His literary acquirements were of little profit to him, for he had not then produced the 'Raven', and was comparatively unknown; as he was almost up to the day of his death. He was of too excitable a nature to become a teacher, and, in fact, too proud to assume the position of an autocrat of the birchen rod.

"He visited Baltimore, where he had some highly respected relatives, and, as a kind of *feeler*, published a small volume of poems, bearing the title of 'Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems', wherein his wild and wayward imagery was given full bridle to. This volume was severely criticized by The Minerva, the editor not knowing the author; and to the day of his death, Poe exhibited the utmost dislike for me; at one time carrying his vindictiveness so far as to assail me on a public thoroughfare, though nothing serious resulted from the encounter. . . ."

Again, later in life, Hewitt writes: "I have, over and over, been asked what kind of a man he was; whether he was a drunkard or opium-eater; if he was a *roué;* if his temperament was sanguine, lymphatic, bilious, or morbid. In answer to all these questions, I say: I know but little of the history or character of Edgar A. Poe; for, though I mingled a good deal with the literary, musical, and military characters of former times, yet I never could become in the least familiar with the subject of this paper. He took a dislike for me, from the fact of my having penned a severe criticism of his poems contained in a small book published in 1829. . . . Poe was then comparatively unknown to the reading community, and his poetry did not suit my ideas of the rhythmic or comprehensive. I admired the richness and smoothness of Thomas Moore and the grandeur of Byron. . . . Poe was not like either. What kind of a man was he? I answer, handsome. A broad forehead, a large, magnificent eye, dark brown and rather curly hair, well formed, about five feet seven in height. He dressed neatly in his palmy days — wore Byron collars and a black neckerchief, looking the poet all over. The expression of his face was thoughtful, melancholy, and rather stern. In disposition he was somewhat overbearing and spiteful. He often vented his spleen on poor Dr. Lofflin, who styled himself the 'Milford Bard', and who outstripped Poe in the *quantity* of his poetry, if not in the *quality*.

"Did he drink spirituous liquors or eat opium? I saw him drunk once, or perhaps under the influence of a narcotic. There are many stories about his being found drunk in the gutter. They are all hearsay; I cannot endorse them. Was he a libertine? While residing in Richmond, I heard many romantic tales of his amours. I cannot vouch for the truth or falsity of these traditions, for the whole is mere gossip. Let the dead rest; it is better that the faults of Edgar A. Poe should be buried with the bones now kept in the bosom of their mother earth by the chaste memorial stone placed over them, to brighten his glory, not to perpetuate his shame.

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"What was his temperament? Undoubtedly sanguine, yet morbid. Remorse brought the 'Raven' to the bust of Pallas, and created the weird forms that continually flitted through his fancy. I always thought Poe a misanthrope, cherishing none of the kindlier feelings of our nature. His criticisms were bitter in the extreme. So freely did he dispense his gall that it was hard to induce publishers of periodicals to publish his essays."

It is to be noted that Hewitt becomes increasingly more charitable and more patronizing as the fame of Poe spreads. He hashes and rehashes his slight memories of the dead poet at every opportunity. He valiantly asserts his determination not to blacken the character of Poe, yet tells all that he can scrape together in his memory of what he has seen or heard. All rumors, he asserts, with a grand gesture. He can not vouch for any of them. And all the time he is rationalizing his early conduct — the writing of his mean and ignorant review, the circumstance of his unethical entering of the Visiter contest, the innumerable petty insinuations that undoubtedly he made and that undoubtedly led to the final, now-so-precious quarrel and assault — and steadily building around himself a Poe legend to fortify his own waning celebrity.

Finally, in rewriting practically all of the foregoing reminiscences, toward the end of his life, Hewitt says:

"When we had our angry dispute on one of the crowded streets of Baltimore, after the award of the committee on the Visiter's prizes, all the bad qualities of Poe's fiery nature seemed to have concentrated in one feeling — mortified pride. He would not allow that he had a peer in the arena of fancy. Although there had been a lapse of years since I had written the criticism on his first (*sic*) publication, still he nursed his bitter dislike for me; still deeper was his mortification when he learned that the detested critic was his successful rival. He was greedy for fame, as well as in need of money — two powerful incentives to cause him to forget the bearing of a gentleman, and assume that of the brute. But let that unpleasant slugging affair be buried with the irascible poet's bones in the graveyard of Westminster Church."

But Hewitt was not content to let any of his Poe associations rest. The evidence of the old scrapbook is against him. At every conceivable opportunity, it would appear, the old gentleman was in print on the subject; the story of the Visiter contest was dished up many, many times, in extraordinary connections, and the story of Poe's dislike recited with infinite gusto by Hewitt himself and by his inspired friends. When an obscure member of the family died, the newspapers carried not only a biography of the decedent, but of the decedent's distinguished forebear, John Hill Hewitt, and an account of that gentleman's quarrel with Poe. When a local elocutionist programmed a poem by John Hill Hewitt, the press, goaded by Hewitt, set forth the circumstance and an account of the Hewitt-Poe vendetta. It was a curious and ironic situation in which, at the last, the old man found himself. His works forgotten, his popularity waning or vanished, his principal claim to public attention had become the fact that once he had quarreled with Edgar Allan Poe. It was all he had left, the memory of that quarrel, and he worked it handsomely.

In a final reference to the contest, in an unpublished paper called "Edgar Allan Poe" now before me, only one new fact emerges. "When Poe discovered that I had used a false name to gain my end," Hewitt wrote, "he accused me of tampering with the committee, a charge which I resented, as I considered it an insult to the integrity of the gentlemen composing the committee. My friends applauded my mode of proceeding."

That is very ambiguous indeed, and one wonders if it does not explain the immediate cause of the "unpleasant slugging affair" that Hewitt was so willing to have buried — but unforgotten — in the graveyard of Westminster Church.

One of Hewitt's poems is titled "At the Grave of Edgar A. Poe", and it should be quoted:

In the gloaming, just as the stars peeped out,
And dreamily the cricket piped his lay,
A bard sat musing. What he thought about,
No one could know, and therefore none could say.

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There was no quiet, though he quiet courted;
The car-bells jingled and the horses snorted,
While ungreased cartwheels rolled o'er pavements gritty,
And newsboys yelled — 'twas in a noisy city.

The crimpt and dusty grass grew at his feet,
A solitary grave was by his side —
The grave of Poe, close by the busy street —
Poe, the dead poet, now the city's pride.
Strange that while living no one gave him merit,
Not e'en the raven in his gloomy garret;
While Poverty, with all her haggard minions,
Croaked with the raven as he flapped his pinions.

Gifted, yet poor, he struggled with the world,
Read Nature as he would a charming book,
Formed elfins in night-vapors as they curled,
And fashioned music from the gurgling brook.
By grim and restless phantoms nightly haunted,
By critics gored, by foul detraction taunted,
He held communion with his fancy only,
And wrapped himself in darkness deep and lonely.

Now that the worms have battened on his brain,
The world finds merit in the song he sung;
When living, no one listened to the strain,
Or marked the halo that around him hung.
Up with the marble shaft! He's not forgotten:
Like salted fish, he shines when he is rotten.
His name was worthless to the bank fraternity,
But, on the slab, it's good for all eternity.

"Strange that while living no one gave him merit!" "By critics gored, by foul detraction taunted!" "When living, no one listened to the strain, or marked the halo that around him hung!" There are lines in these stanzas after writing which one wonders that Hewitt dared to look into a mirror and confront himself. And the poem suggests at once the quality of the poetry and the soul of John Hill Hewitt.

Hewitt died in 1890, at the age of 89 years, and achieved two columns in each of the local newspapers. From them, one learns that Mr. Hewitt once knew Edgar Allan Poe, who disliked him and assaulted him upon the street. One learns that Mr. Hewitt once defeated Edgar Allan Poe in a poetry contest. And, reading the yellowed clippings, with deep satisfaction one learns that Mr. Hewitt wrote many hundreds of songs and poems, no single title of which is familiar or remembered.

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# JEREMY AT CRALE

*His Friends, His Ambitions, and His One Great Enemy*

## By Hugh Walpole

### PART XI

THERE had not for a long time been a real fight at Runners and it had been considerably discussed as to the views the authorities would have about it. After the last fight, between Morgan and Dance more than a year and a half ago, it had been said that another would never be allowed again, that the Camel held that these fights belonged to the age of barbarism and that he would put them down.

In the excitement before the battle and especially because he had been definitely encouraged by Llewellyn, who was a school prefect, Jeremy had lost sight of this aspect of the affair. Now it came before him with a dazzling suddenness.

In ordinary circumstances the danger would not have been very great. The end of the term was now only a fortnight distant and a licking or "confinement to barracks" would not be a serious penalty — but, as things actually were, it was a matter to him of life and death. It seemed to him, as he looked at it with a schoolboy's exaggeration of immediate circumstances, as though the whole future of his life was at stake.

Because as the end of the term was only a fortnight away so also was the match against Callendar.

Now the two matches against Callendar, in the summer cricket and in the winter football, were the two great sporting events of the Crale year. Callendar was the only great public school within any real possible distance, geographically, of Crale. Its records were as fine as Crale's and for over sixty years these two schools had fought out annually these two great struggles.

To play in the Callendar Match was the final ambition of every Crale boy. It meant not only your First Colors but a glorious memory that would last your lifetime. Certain of these games were historic and to have played in them made yourself a historic figure.

All Jeremy's attempted self-disciplines and anxieties this term had hung around the Callendar game. He had not at the beginning of the term dared to admit to himself that he had any real chance of playing but, as term had advanced, it became clear that the competition for Scrum Halves was this term of a low average, that his two rivals were neither of them very satisfactory. Above all, Stephens, who was certain of his place as Stand-Off Half, preferred to play with him. His luck had been in and out but during the last fortnight in the House Matches he had played well.

Until this new danger arose he had not realized how frantic his ambition had become. It was true that he had in all probability four more football seasons at Crale but it seemed to him in the immediate press of the conditions that there would be no glory at all in playing *next* year or the year after. Did he gain his cap this season he would be one of the youngest boys ever capped at Crale and he would, with all those other seasons before him, be almost assured of his Captaincy before he left the school.

Moreover because of the happenings of this term, his temporary disgrace, the behavior of both Leeson and Parlow, it was urgently necessary for him to re-estabish himself.

Finally Crale had been beaten by Callendar for the last two years. Without undue conceit he was sure that himself and



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Stephens as a pair could help Crale to victory as no other halves in the school could.

Stevens did play better with Jeremy as partner than with any one else and Stevens with his strange unorthodox brilliance might easily turn the scale in the school's favor.

And now, just as the football gods were beginning to realise this, this other thing might slip in and prevent it.

Oh, if they were determined to punish him let them choose any other penalties than this. He would suffer a hundred lickings, confine himself to his own Study for ever, write out five thousand lines rather than be deprived of the great chance of his life!

The awful thing was the uncertainty. You could not tell what people were thinking. He watched the Camel anxiously in Chapel to see whether he were in disgrace but the Camel never apparently looked at him. He invented a need for notebooks that he might go to Leeson's Study and mark his behaviour to him but Leeson was busy and had no time for more than a curt permission.

Every instant he expected some heavy hand to fall upon him and that he would be led off to hear his sentence.

This began to dig into his nerves as nothing had since, as a tiny kid, he had waited trembling for the visits of the Sea Captain. His sleep deserted him, a thing unknown to him in all his life before.

He woke at strange hours to lie there, seeing the others stretched like corpses around him, to hear the sea restlessly warning him of the worst, to think, as one does at those accursed hours, of all his sins and misfortunes, of all the people who hated him, of all the silly things he had done and the sillier things he was yet likely to do. At such a time it seemed to him that his doom was certain, that he had no chance at all and that he would be for ever marked out in a jeering world as the boy who missed his chance because of a stupid fight.

But why did they not pronounce their horrible sentence? Why did they leave it hanging above his head in this cruel fashion? They were worse than the Inquisition torturers of whom he had read in "Westward Ho!" and other glorious works.

At last he could endure his suspense no longer and resolved to go and ask Llewellyn for the fatal truth.

He was shy about this. Llewellyn might fancy that he was taking advantage of the invitation to tea — but he must go.

So he went. And, poking his head inside the door, discovered Corner in there alone.

"Oh . . . ." he said foolishly.

Corner, who was leaning up against the bookcase staring into vacancy, said without moving his head:

"Well?"

This was not very encouraging.

"Oh," said Jeremy again, "I say, is Llewellyn here?" — a foolish remark because Llewellyn most obviously wasn't.

"No," said Corner. "Do you want him?"

"Silly ass," thought Jeremy. "Of course I do or I wouldn't have asked for him."

"Yes," he said.

"He'll be back in a minute," Corner said without moving. Then slowly he turned his head and, staring at Jeremy as though he were beholding him for the first time in his life, said:

"I say — have you ever read any Keats?"

"Any what?" asked Jeremy bewildered. He was now well within the room.

"Any Keats. Poetry."

"Oh, no," said Jeremy relieved.

"I thought you might have," Corner looked sourly disappointed. "You're the fellow who's got an uncle who paints, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"So I thought you might have read Keats too."

Jeremy said nothing and an awkward silence crept about the room. Into this most happily the stout Llewellyn plunged. "Hullo!" he cried, seeing Jeremy.

He was surprised and that made it no easier — nevertheless Jeremy went forward. He wished terribly that Corner were not there.

"Look here. I didn't want to disturb you. It's only a minute."

"No, that's all right," Llewellyn said, standing, his legs well spread, looking at

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Jeremy and smiling. When he smiled he was charming; all his natural good heart, his clumsy amiability, the real true sweetness of his very simple character, came out in that smile. And he liked young Cole, he liked him better every time he saw him.

"What's the row?" he asked.

"It's like this," Jeremy said, in his urgency forgetting Corner and all his surroundings; "I've got a chance of playing in the Callendar game, haven't I? Everyone knows I have and Stevens is certain to play and he'd rather play with me as scrum half than with anyone else and they've tried all the other combinations and neither Burnett nor Robson are right are they? Well then," he paused to draw breath, "I'm frightfully keen on playing, of course — anyone is. I don't want you to tell me whether I'm playing but chaps have been saying that someone's going to kick up a row because of the fight I had with Staire the other day and that they're going to drop on me and perhaps stop my playing."

He paused. He looked at Llewellyn and when their eyes met it seemed that they had gone a step further in their friendship.

"Oh, Lord," said Llewellyn. "I hadn't heard anything about it. I hope they won't." This was in a way reassuring but in a way it was not. Llewellyn hadn't heard anything — *that* was good — on the other hand he was obviously alarmed.

"Do you think there can be anything in it?" he asked.

"I don't know" Llewellyn answered slowly. "Leeson's a rum bird. You never know what he's thinking."

"He hasn't said anything to you?"

"Not a word, and I went and told him there was going to be a fight and he said All right, go ahead."

"Oh, did you? That was awfully decent of you."

"Not a bit. I told you I would. But the Camel may have made a row since."

"Oh, may he?"

"They say he meant to stamp on the Runners scraps altogether. I don't know. On the other hand I bet Leeson told him before it came off and he could have stopped it then."

"Yes, he could, couldn't he?" said Jeremy, relieved. "Thanks most awfully."

He turned to go. It seemed that Llewellyn wanted to say something more to him. But he didn't. So Jeremy went. Only, oddly, out in the passage Jeremy thought to himself "I don't believe Corner likes me".

Very soon the topic with everyone began to be the Callendar match. In Leeson's it was a topic of fiery interest and for this reason — it was discovered that if young Cole was chosen Leeson's would have more boys in the team than any other House. They were certain of four — three Forwards, Llewellyn, Monteith and Wakefield, one Three Quarter, Barry. Bunt's might have four if Burnett played instead of Cole. If Cole played Leeson's would have five, the largest number that they had had in this particular match within anyone's memory.

As soon as, therefore, it was discovered that there was this House rivalry in the matter the excitement was terrific. Stocky Cole *must* play. Of *course* he was better than Burnett. Everyone knew that. It was only dirty favoritism on Bunt's part that gave Burnett a chance. There were darkly whispered plots in the Lower School as to the private poisoning of Burnett by putting glass into his drink — or why not break his leg by tying a string across his house-door at night? The Dormouse, now a very active member of society, was one of the most fertile in these plans. There followed then a House Game between Bunt's and Haggard's in which Burnett played extremely well and one between Leeson's and Bunt's in which Jeremy, hopelessly nervous for the first time in his life, did less than nothing at all.

Jeremy was watched and cared for as a prize animal might be, advised as to his food, begged not to go out after dark, pestered with advice as to his play, urged to practice secretly with Stevens.

As the days advanced he was himself in a panic. He had never known anything like this. He felt at length that it would be a relief to find the names up and his own not among them. Anything to escape from this hateful uncertainty. . . .

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Today at last the uncertainty would be over. Between five and six in the afternoon the team would be up on the Games Board.

As he dressed and ran down to Call-Over he wondered how he would last through the hours. He held himself in, speaking to no one lest he should show his anxiety.

He had a difficult time with Parlow that morning. Parlow had been strange during the last fortnight, uneasy, ironical, making as it were approaches back to the old relationship again.

But Jeremy gave him no help. He was not going to forget in a hurry. And he was uneasy with Parlow now. He didn't trust him any longer. And when he didn't trust anybody he was at a loss. He didn't know how to behave.

Oddly enough they were this morning in the English lesson again back at the "Tintern Abbey" that had originally caused the trouble. Many weeks of deep thinking and serious attention had brought the class through a bewildering underbrush of thirty lines or so. (A sure method this of successfully slaughtering any boy's natural love of good poetry.)

Jeremy remembered his "bit" well enough this morning:

"If this
Be but a vain belief, yet oh! how oft
In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee
O Sylvan Wye!"

He said his lines admirably, quite correctly and with exactly no meaning in them at all.

Parlow looked at him with cold irony but behind the irony he seemed to say:

"Look here, let's be friends again. Forgive what I did. Let's be as we were." Jeremy regarded him stonily as though he were the image of Daddy Wordsworth himself and, while he was monotonously reciting, his brain was arguing: "But if they play Burnett they've simply lost the match. Anyone could tell them at. . . ."

"And what, my dear young friend," asked Parlow "do you consider is meant exactly by 'the many shapes of joyless daylight'?"

Jeremy considered. "Well, sir, I should think he sometimes got sick of everything, didn't find anything amusing." (And he was thinking: "Anyway if they do put Burnett in Stevens will make a nice row. . . .")

"Oh, that's your opinion is it?" Parlow continued. "Rather badly put, but one can scarcely perhaps expect good style from a famous footballer . . ."

(And *he* was saying: "Come along now. We used to have such a good time. If I did lose my temper you're very irritating at times, you know.")

"'The fretful stir'," Parlow went on. "Why 'fretful' do you think?"

"Taken from children, sir," said Jeremy promptly. "Children are fretful and — and — make a stir."

(He was thinking: "Perhaps the Camel will tell them that he thinks I oughtn't to play. Rotten trick if he does. If he wanted to punish me he could give me a licking. . . .")

"Very ingenious, friend Cole," Parlow was saying. "Mr. Wordsworth would undoubtedly be grateful if he heard you. But why limit fretfulness to children? You would scarcely call yourself a child, I gather, and even schoolmasters at times have been known to — "

This roused, of course, a hearty laugh throughout the form, but Jeremy did not even hear it. He was thinking: "And Burnett never goes down to the scrums properly. He funks them every time. Everyone says so. . . ."

He could eat no dinner. The hot slabs of mutton, the monotonous cabbage, how repulsive they were. No one mentioned the game to him, but it was in everybody's thoughts.

There was a House Practice and he waited wearily under biting cold wind while scrums were formed again and again and shouted at by Wakefield, one of the certainties for the Callendar match. Llewellyn was in all probability at that very moment with the other selectors choosing the team, and at that thought he warmed a little because

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Llewellyn undoubtedly liked him and wanted him to play. He liked Llewellyn, yes, he thought about it standing shivering on the field while the incoherent scrimmages flopped and fell and rose again. The three boys in the school he liked best — Jumbo, Llewellyn and Ridley — how different they were! He was afraid, he realised, of something in Llewellyn's liking for him. While he was only too safe in his friendship for Jumbo, so that it was in danger of tedium, and while his feeling about Ridley called out of him nothing but hero-worship and a determination to do the very best at everything, with Llewellyn there was something "queer" . . . . he wasn't comfortable. . . . Oh, here was practice over! He could go. He ran up to the changing room and with a shock so savage that it was like a blow in the face from an enemy he understood that in a moment or two now the list would be up. By the time he had changed it would be on the wall and his fate decided. He stood for a moment sick in the stomach and his legs refused to take him on to the changing room. He drove himself forward. He didn't want to speak to a soul. He took his shower, noticed that his body was trembling, rubbed himself violently, huddled on his clothes.

His body now was icy cold but his head hot. He felt that he must give himself away completely to anyone who saw him. He walked out into the air and stood there in the cold wind pushing his hands through his hair.

The list was in all probability up there now and he hadn't the courage to go and see. No, he hadn't the courage. Someone must come and tell him. But — if they were playing Burnett. . . . Well, anyone could see. . . . Oh, he didn't care. It was only this waiting. Well, why wait any longer? The list was there. He turned slowly towards the Big School corridor where the sporting notices were always posted and, as he went, he observed ridiculous things, a piece of dirty newspaper whirling by itself as though it were taking exercise for warmth, some boys kicking a football on the field and how long the ball seemed to linger in the air against the gray and crumpled sea, a boy hurrying past him, a pile of books under his arm. . . . Oh, the idiot that he was! Let him get it over and have done with it. He moved through the big doors and saw the long stone corridor stretching apparently for miles in front of him and on the far end at the right against the bright yellow board what was, from where he stood, a tiny square of white.

Slowly he went down the corridor. At the moment there was no one there. He was alone in the whole school save for someone who in the distance was tinkling a piano.

He choked in the throat. Unknowingly he clenched his hot damp hands behind his back. He looked up.

There it was.

CRALE V CALLENDAR

A list of names. Nowhere his own. Hoskyns. . . . Bender. Forsyth . . . . Marsh. Richards Mi. Wakefield. . . .

He could have sobbed with disappointment and then — as though it had suddenly leaped upon the page:

Half-Backs { Cole / Stevens

Cole, Stevens — COLE, STEVENS. COLE . . . COLE . . . . COLE . . .

He turned away, smiling at nothing in an idiotic manner. A group of boys, chattering eagerly, were hastening to the Board. He fled as though he had committed a crime.

The great day broke in fog, sea fog, dank, spidery, chilly and blinding. The only thing beside a bed-rock frost to fear. And here it was. What was God about?

At eight o'clock the fog was blinding and you could hear the signals of the ships at sea. At nine o'clock it had cleared a little and you could see men as trees walking. At ten it had come on again and it crept into the class room writing its horrid way about forms and boys and masters.

"No match to-day," Parlow said grimly and everyone hated Parlow. At eleven it was thin again and at twelve a miserable sun like a shabby soup plate made a ring.

At one o'clock there was no fog, the Callendar team had arrived and everyone was singing.

The tortures suffered by Jeremy during the

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morning could not be described by the author of "A Rebours" at his most grimy. Until one o'clock when it was certain that the match would be played he thought that he would make a hole in the sea if it was "off"; after one o'clock suicide seemed the only alternative to eternal disgrace. He wouldn't be able to play. He had better go and tell them so. His legs didn't belong to him, he couldn't see, he was sick in the stomach.

At two o'clock they were gathered together for a few words from Beltane, their gallant captain. He was red-headed and some seven feet odd in height. To Jeremy he was a full grown man as old as Uncle Samuel. He had a mustache. His wrath when things went wrong was something terrible.

"Look here, you chaps," he said. "We've got to win to-day. Partly because we haven't been beaten this term yet and partly because Callendar's won three years running. We're up against a stiff lot today and Mellon's probably the best three-quarter playing on any school side this season. But that needn't worry us. We've got a better pack than theirs or I'll go and bury myself. I'm not saying anything against the Three-Quarters, who are fine, but I expect we'd better make it a Forward game. And quick, their three-quarters. Mellon's the devil. And remember whatever happens in the first half you can always win any game in the second half, so don't get down-hearted. On the other hand if we have some luck in the first half don't get over confident. The game isn't won until the last whistle goes."

Jeremy, listening, felt that he would willingly die for him. Then of course Bunt had to say a few foolish words and every one hated him and wished him buried. The Callendar men came onto the field first and there was the polite cheering of hosts who want their guests to be comfortable, but when the Crale team ran out you could surely have heard the shout at Land's End had you been there listening.

But Jeremy, as he ran on, was conscious of nothing but the state of the ground. It was hard, damned hard. There was a thin silver rime of frost and frosted ridges where the soil had been kicked up in the mud. It would *hurt* when you fell. But that was a thought to keep away from you. Nevertheless he wished his throat was not so dry and he was sure that everyone must see how his knees were trembling.

And then the Callendar people looked *enormous*. Giants! The Crale Forwards would never be able to hold them.

He was aware of the crowd as a kind of black wall penning him in. He dared not look at it, nor think of it, nor consider the way that it would feel did he miss something or funk going down to the scrum. *That* scrum! How would he ever be able to stop them?

The whistle blew.

Yes, the whistle blew, and exactly one second later the most awful thing in all the recorded history of Crale School occurred.

Mellon, the Callendar star, scored a try.

How it happened Jeremy never exactly knew. Crale had kicked off, the Callendar back had gathered the ball and punted back, somebody picked it up, passed forward, there was a scrimmage, and a moment later the Callendar half had it, had passed to Mellon and Mellon was off. He eluded Bender, the Crale Three-Quarter, side-stepped Hoskyns the Back and had touched the ball down.

To say that this was tragedy was to say nothing. You could feel the horror of it strike the crowd like a blinding lightning flash. No sound came. No movement, only a dreadful heart-stopped flush as the world waited to see whether Callendar would kick a goal or no. Callendar did kick a goal. Callander had a lead of five points in the first minute.

Upon Jeremy this devastating catastrophe produced one of his cold remorseless rages. Upon the rest of the Crale team also perhaps. Certainly upon Jeremy. As always when something terrible happened to him he saw all the Cole family gathered together, insulted and injured. It was as though someone had just stepped up and told him that his father was a rotten preacher, that his sister Mary was plain beyond bearing, that his sister Helen was a conceited prig. Also as though his family were stationed just in front of the crowd, remarks were passing on every side

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of them: "Of course Crale hasn't a chance against Callendar". "That boy, Mellon, will run through again and again". "He'll do just what he likes with them all".

Moreover he could tell from the way that the Callendar men carried themselves as they triumphantly strutted back to the middle of the field again that they were thinking the same as the crowd: "Well, this is going to be an easy thing. All we've got to do is to see that Mellon has the ball. That oughtn't to be difficult. We'll knock up a record score".

Now, as every boy in the Crale team was feeling just as Jeremy, it was not unnatural that when the whistle sounded and one of the Callendar Three-Quarters, gathering the ball, failed to hold it, the Crale forwards were upon the Callendarians like lions let loose on an Indian village.

Now Beltane had been right when he said that the Crale pack this season was an unusually good one. It was in physical size, with the exception of Beltane himself and Llewellyn, smaller than the Callendar pack, but Beltane had a genius for Forward play (as, if India hadn't claimed him, England would afterwards most certainly have discovered) and throughout that term he had been educating and chiding and drilling those forwards as though they had been his own children. The result of this was that they worked as one brain. They knew what they could do and what each one of them could do. Those were the days before "Wingers" and before the time when a Forward had to be almost as fast as a three-quarter if he was worth his place, but Beltane had some ideas before his time and if little Ronny Marsh wasn't exactly a "Winger" he was as near to it as no matter.

The Callendar forwards, thick and heavy to a man, had learnt to pack and to shove and that was about all that they could do.

It was soon discovered that the Crale Forwards were getting the ball nine times out of ten and as soon as the school crowd behind the ropes discovered this the cheering became frantic.

And now Jeremy came into his game. If there is anything in this world that a scrum-half loves it is to have his Forwards heeling out the ball well and cleanly and then to have a wise and astute Stand-off Half to pass to. All these conditions were now Jeremy's and for ten minutes he knew perfect happiness.

The artist in him could feel that symmetry and rhythm that informed those eight bending and straining bodies in front of him, there spread to his own heart that sacred fire that was burning in theirs.

"Coming right, Crale," and then the swing, the urge, the quick clean flick of the back row of heels and out the ball came and away, a second later, to Stephens.

How often during those ten minutes should Crale have scored and how often, alas, did the Crale Three-quarters bungle their passes, send them forward, misfield them, bunch too closely together, run straight when they should have feinted, kick into touch when the field was clear in front of them.

As magnificent as were the Crale Forwards during that time so disappointing and wrong headed were the Crale Three-Quarters.

And yet as School Three-Quarters go they were not a bad line. On an ordinary day against an ordinary team they would have won fine green laurels. Or it may have been that they were as good as the Callendar men allowed them to be. Certainly the Callendar marking and collaring was of the very finest order. They had that stamp of first class footballers — they had prevision. Mellon above all seemed to rule the game as a great player of chess might do, dictating the moves to the other side and then spoiling them.

But if Mellon was the genius of the Callendar team it was clear enough by now that Stevens was the genius of the Crale. No move now that he did not attempt. Testing one of the Three Quarters after another he showed no disappointment when they failed him. It was as though he were always behind them suggesting the right thing for them to do.

Jeremy himself had the strangest sense that he and Stevens were the same man in the same body. The Callendar Scrum-Half was a little thin wiry creature with a long nose; he was everywhere at once and was, Jeremy was certain, more generally off-side than not, but Jeremy and Stevens were too much for him.

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He was losing his temper, Jeremy perceived with pleasure, and muttering wild and savage words. All the better. Lose your temper and your game was spoilt.

Nevertheless it was at last evident that for the moment at least the Crale Three-Quarters were of no use so that a Forward game it must be and a Forward game it became.

Now, shrilly from behind the ropes, came the scream from a hundred throats: "Feet! Feet! Feet! . . . FEET, SCHOOL" . . . and "Feet" it was. It was worth going a hundred miles by sea or land to watch then how the Crale Forwards kept the ball, how they broke, dribbled, formed, how when the Callendar Forwards fell on the ball, they massed and shoved and shoved again and then, when the whistle sounded, how swiftly and neatly they packed and then, instead of heeling, rushed the big Callendar men off their ground, broke and dribbled and swerved and feinted. Now at last the ball was in the enemy Twenty-Five, nearer and ever nearer, and the crowd behind the ropes became hysterical with joy and rapture.

Then came a moment when Crale was almost over. Nothing could be seen but the heaving bodies confused and commingled on the goal line itself. Jeremy was aware of nothing, crouching beside the turmoil waiting for that miraculous moment when the ball would appear, touch his hands and be off to the Three-Quarters who could surely not, at that distance, fail to score.

But the ball did not appear. Someone fell, someone fell on top of him, then someone else, and beyond the tangled heap came the clear call of the whistle: "Five yards back!"

Back they went, down again, the ball flung in; the Callendar Forwards had it and manoeuvred the finest wheel of the match, swinging round against all opposition, keeping the ball between their feet and dribbling it in one gigantic rush back to the middle of the field.

A great sigh went up from behind the ropes. The chance was lost. When, oh when, would it occur again?

It was then that Jeremy was aware of Bender, the Crale Three-Quarter facing the great Mellon. He knew (but he could not tell you how he knew) that Bender was terrified. His spirit seemed to enter into Bender's spirit. There was no moment in the whole game when he was more intent on his own business, but behind that intentness seemed to be this other knowledge— Bender was terrified and was going to let them down.

Bender was recognized as nervous and sometimes undependable but he was chosen for his speed. He stood there now waiting on his wing apparently calm and prepared but Jeremy *knew*. Did Callendar score another goal before half time and the game was as good as lost. How *could* they make more than ten points in the second half against such an opposition? It must be almost half time now.

Mellon, who had a strange face with a large nose and heavy beetling black eyebrows, assumed for Jeremy then the figure of some avenging fate. He seemed to grow in size and when Jeremy, slinging the ball into the scrum, could not see him he yet felt him there standing over the wretched Bender, waiting to pounce.

In an agony of terror Jeremy saw that the Callendar Forwards had the ball, that it was out and away. It passed with a beautiful clean swinging movement along the Three-Quarter line and Mellon had it. He swerved past Mellon who missed him altogether. Had he run then straight down the touch line he must have scored but for once, making a wrong decision, he swerved inward, passed Llewellyn and some Forwards and then came tearing in Jeremy's direction.

If Jeremy ever felt small in his life he felt small then. He had always known, ever since he had first started to play football, that if there was one thing in life of which, in his secret heart, he was desperately afraid it was of tackling a big and fast Three-Quarter. He did not care (or at least in his normal healthy days he did not care) to how many Forward rushes he went down. That seemed to be his natural job. But this other, its isolation, the danger of a swerve that left you gaping foolishly in midair, or the risk of tackling too high so that you were shaken off and flung for nothing, or the other peril of meeting him full shock and getting a concussion that made you useless for the re-

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mainder of the game — all these things he knew only too terribly well.

Now the worst was upon him. He felt that the field behind him was clear and that Hoskyns, the Back, rushing across, would never be in time. If he missed this Mellon could take his pleasure, plant the ball where he fancied, and a goal would be the certain result.

A bridge in an endless space! His heart guttered, his eyes darkened, he saw an enormous tree detach itself from the far end of the field and, black as ebony, wave its branches derisively against a silver sky. He heard some voice call. He flung himself forward and for an instant Mellon's face with its thick bushy eyebrows rushed at him like a flying moon. He fell forward straight against Mellon's bony knees and round those his arms tightened like a vise.

He knew that Mellon was falling and a triumphant crow echoed somewhere in his throat. Mellon crashed to the ground, Jeremy slipping away from him as he fell.

When he picked himself up he could hear them shouting. Stevens running past him cried: "Well tackled, Stocky", and a moment later he was bending beside the scrum again shouting: "Coming left, School . . . Coming left".

He had saved the situation for the moment but only for the moment. Once more the Callendar Forwards had the ball, once more it was out and swinging down the Callendar line.

Mellon had it and this time made no mistake but ran straight up to the touch line. Bender was opposite to him. It was not a difficult tackle but Jeremy with agony knew that Bender would miss it.

He hesitated, put out his hands feebly, caught the slack of Mellon's bags and Mellon was past him. Hoskyns went for him but Mellon swerved and the ball was touched down behind the goal posts.

The kick for goal missed, the ball just slanting on the outside of the posts.

The whistle went for half time. Callendar led by eight points to none.

*(To be continued)*

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# SOME SÉVERAL LITERARY OFFERINGS

By Burton Rascoe

## CABELL'S EVE

SOMETHING ABOUT EVE. *By James Branch Cabell. McBride. $2.50.*

CABELL was writing this novel nine years ago. In a letter I had from him not long after the publication of "Jurgen", he said that in March, 1918, he temporarily put aside his "Something About Eve" to write a short story H. L. Mencken had requested for the Smart Set, which Mencken "seemed to merit". The short story was "Some Ladies and Jurgen", in which the Devil offers Jurgen the three symbolic ladies, Guenevere, Cleopatra and Helen, and the poet prefers, after due consideration, his prosaic wife.

After Cabell had written the story he realized that the idea in it would have been more effective if Jurgen had previously known and loved and lost these women in various avatars over some centuries of time; so he set to work upon the novel for which he already had four episodes postulated and a fascinating problem in construction to work out. He wanted to call that novel "The Pawnbroker's Shirt", because it had occurred to him to permit his hero to wear the Nessus shirt without any harm or inconvenience; but he was dissuaded from doing so by Guy Holt, then with the McBride company, who argued with commercial vehemence and conviction that it was a bad "selling" title.

After "Jurgen", Cabell was to publish seven books, including three biographies of Dom Manuel and his progeny and two books disposing neatly of his literary enemies, before going back to his story of Gerald Musgrave's pact with the Sylan, which enabled Gerald Musgrave to escape for a while the nagging importunities of a married gentlewoman who had "trusted him and given him all" and to become a god, journeying on a silver stallion to his appointed kingdom in the Marches of Antan. For "Jurgen" had suggested, and in a way made necessary, the writing of the biographies contained in "Figures of Earth", "The High Place", and "The Silver Stallion". What seems, then, like an elaborately preconceived sequence of tales, all closely related and each falling into its proper place around a central theme, was really not planned at all. One story suggested another and in a measure wrote itself; and the biographies therefore were not presented in the chronological order of the lifetimes of their heroes.

From passages in "Something About Eve", recognizable, I believe, as having been written nine years earlier than the rest, one is able to see and marvel at Cabell's creative development. These passages contain ideas presented in comparatively simple form which he was later to elaborate and make complex in their suggestions. So complex, indeed, did these suggestions become in "Jurgen" and the later books that it is possible to read certain episodes half a dozen times, each time with a new pleasure and a new meaning.

Cabell aspires to write (and from the evidence succeeds in writing) literature like the great classics of the imagination which each man interprets according to his lights. His books then become realism in a very real sense, since they reflect life not as an unchanging mood, pattern or formula, but as a many-faceted adventure in which each person discovers precisely what his temperament enables him to discover. It is even possible for the pedantically minded, like the late Maurice Hewlitt, to get out of "Jurgen" only annoyance over the fact that Cabell's mythology is his own invention and is not orthodox. It is also possible to see in "Figures of Earth" either nothing but pornography or, on the other hand, an ambitious attempt to rewrite humanity's sacred books.

The scheme of "Something About Eve" is comparatively simple. It is called "a comedy of fig-leaves" and it is Cabell's ad-



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umbration of the myth of the Earth Mother, of Eve, Thetis, Maya, or Sereda, as she is variously called. She is the goddess of domesticity, of the home, of practical living and contentment with things as they are without any disturbing aspirations toward things as they should be. As Maya in the Hindu myth she is called the preserver as distinguished from Siva, the destroyer, and Brahma, the creator. In the Hebraic legends she is Mother Eve, who became the second wife of Adam when he finally settled down after an unfruitful and hectic affair with Lilith, who was also a destroyer.

When Gerald Musgrave makes his pact with the Sylan, whereby the Sylan inhabits Gerald Musgrave's body and writes Gerald Musgrave's scholarly treatises on marriage customs and moral ideas and takes over Gerald Musgrave's vexatious mistress, Gerald Musgrave goes adventuring through time and space in search of that kingdom of happiness and perfection which all men somehow believe to be their birthright. One experience had taught Gerald Musgrave that adultery can not only contain all the platitudes of marriage but also entail obligations even more harassing than domestic bonds, and so Gerald Musgrave in his adventures puts off his several enticing temptresses and refuses to take any chances on being later reminded that they had trusted him and given him all. "Something About Eve", then, is another Cabellian comedy of shirking and evasions — this time the evasions being those of the moral man, who declines to risk the hazards of immorality.

Gerald Musgrave's inhibitions had been firmly established by his affair with Evelyn Townsend. "Every marriage gets at least one man into trouble," philosophized Gerald to the Sylan, "and it is not always the bridegroom. You see, sir, by the worst of luck, this Evelyn Townsend is already married, so that ours had necessarily to become an adulterous union. It is the tragedy of my life that I met my Cousin Evelyn too late to marry her. Any married person of real ingenuity and tolerable patience can induce his wife to divorce him. But there is no way known to me for a Southern gentleman to get rid of a lady whom he has possessed illegally, until she has displayed the decency to become tired of him. . . . You know as well as I do that every pretty woman ought, by and by, to remember what she owes to her husband and to her marriage vows, and to act accordingly. Repentance when suitably timed in a liaison makes for everybody's happiness. But women, sir, some women stay more affectionately adhesive than an anaconda. They weep. They reply to their helpless paramours' every least attempt at rational statement, 'And I trusted you! I gave you all!'"

The Sylan replied, not unsympathetically, "I also in my time have heard that observation without any active enjoyment. It is, I believe, unanswerable".

"Gerald shuddered. 'There is, for a Southern gentleman at all events, no really satisfactory reply save murder. And against that solution there is of course a rather general prejudice. Therefore a woman of this bleating sort exacts fidelity, she makes every nature of unconscionable demand, and she pesters you to the verge of lunacy, always upon the unanswerable ground that her claim upon your gratitude, and upon your instant obedience in everything, ought not to exist. Oh, I assure you, my dear fellow, there is no more sensible piece of friendly counsel existent than is the Seventh Commandment!'"

The Sylan had had contentment for too long among the dreams of a god and had a hankering for the zest to be derived out of subterfuges and compromises, fears and deceivings; so, by agreement he took over Gerald Musgrave's natural body with that body's obligations and Gerald Musgrave set out to obtain from the Master Philologist the best words with which to work magic and the wonder-working mirror of Queen Freydis. Horvendile provided Gerald with the silver stallion, Pegasus, for his journey. But before he concluded his journey he met up with Maya, who treated him to the novelty of not falling in love with him and so piqued his curiosity that he stayed with her and married her, and put off his journey from day to day until the contentment of middle age seized him and the son that Maya

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bore him was ready to take the stallion and go in search of the kingdom Gerald had neglected to attain.

At Maya's house Gerald, now become a god, saw other gods on the Road to Antan — Nero and Solomon and Merlin, Villon, Odysseus, and Tannhauser, and Merlin and the Sphinx, each of whom had achieved perfection in a different art of living, and each of whom bore witness to the Two Truths that Gerald found to be enduring.

Inevitably Gerald wonders what it would have been like had he let himself go and had he yielded to desire; and inevitably he invented a past for himself in which he was a gay dog and a very rip with the women. But the truth was that he was merely a famous scholar, toiling in a library:

"That blinking magpie in this somewhat stuffy room day after day compiled the valuable and interesting matter in those quartos and the trivial magniloquence in those scrapbooks. And that, virtually, was all he ever did. Such was his living in a world profuse in so many agreeabilities — to be tasted and seen, to be smelt and heard and handled, at absolutely your own discretion, in this so opulent world wherein anyone could live very royally, and with never-failing ardor, upon every person's patrimony of the five human senses.

"Meanwhile, such self-devotion had paid, under time's grasping governance, an exorbitant tax. The impaired shrunk body was unhealthy looking. Under each of the wavering dim eyes showed a peculiar white splotch. The skin of the noted scholar was pasty and seemed greasy. He had hardly any hair except those gray and untended whiskers. Everywhere he was shrivelled and lean, except for the abrupt, the surprising protusion of a large paunch. He self-evidently had inadequate kidneys, and an impaired heart, and defective teeth, and a sluggish liver, and approximately every other drawback to a sedentary person's late middle life."

There follows a colloquy between Gerald Musgrave and the high-hearted boy in quest of romance that he started out to be; and the novel ends *da capo*, with that boy's faith as yet unshattered by disillusion and disappointment. Gerald felt for him no commiseration for "A million or so other lads more or less like this enthusiastic young fellow were at that instant preparing for the same downcasting and failure; and by and by these lads also would be facing their own unimportance with equanimity. For, as you — however suddenly, — got older, there was less bitterness, there was hardly any bitterness at all, to be derived of the knowledge that in human living very much amounted to nothing, because you saw even more clearly and more constantly that nothing amounted to very much".

But for the old scholar, the red-headed boy had pity: "Decidedly, the old fellow was lost: for now he was infatuated by the contentment to be got out of writing, which remained always in its own way, as bedrugging as the contentment to be got out of domesticity; and there was no help for the preposterous, doomed, chuckling Gerald Musgrave — who would always now be finding one or another rather beautiful idea to play with, and who must remain, so long as life remained, a poet whose one real delight was to shape and to play with puppets".

Decidedly everything depends upon the way you look at things, and as Jurgen observed, there is much to be said on both sides.

The novel, at any rate, from the way I look at it, is richly beautiful. With it — so I hear — the biographies of Dom Manuel and his descendants end, and, fittingly, it commemorates the intelligence and wisdom of women. Among these biographies it is difficult to choose one for special favor, for they are all treasuries of wit and beauty. The twelfth chapter of "Something About Eve", which was published in the September issue of THE BOOKMAN, is a miracle of compression: it is a complete history of imaginative literature and at the same time a commentary upon the origin or myths and legends. Such writing as one finds in "Something About Eve" is enough to make other scribblers wish to chuck writing in despair forever.

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## MISS CATHER AND OTHERS

DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP. *By Willa Cather. Knopf. $2.50.*
THE AMERICAN CARAVAN. *A Yearbook of American Literature. Edited by Van Wyck Brooks, Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford and Paul Rosenfeld. Macaulay. Distributed by the Literary Guild of America. $5.00.*
THE ROMANCE OF VILLON. *By Francis Carco. Translated by Hamish Miles. Knopf. $5.00.*

IN "Death Comes for the Archbishop", I take it, Miss Cather has taken a sabbatical in order to write a story outside her main line of interests because she wanted to describe the effect of the clear air and sunlight of Mexico and because she wanted to write about Catholic prelates. It is not a story, I think, which those who liked "My Antonia" and "A Lost Lady" will find especially thrilling. Enjoyment of it must come largely from her cadenced prose. It is a story of missionary work in Mexico in the middle years of the nineteenth century and of a young priest's efforts to introduce Christian morals and civilization into a community of heathenish and animalistic Mexican peasants. It seems to me a formless sort of novel in which only one character comes to life and that character only for a moment. That was when Father Vaillant shooed the Mexican cook out of the kitchen, and prepared a roast that he could eat. For the rest I read the novel with a constant satisfaction over the limpid prose and with a constantly disappointed hope of discovering a theme or a story in it.

* * *

The editors of "The American Caravan" sent out a manifesto more than a year ago which was meant to reach all American writers, outlining the scheme of the yearbook and asking for contributions. It was assumed by the editors that the standardized needs of American magazines were responsible for much fine, fresh, racy literature of American life going unpublished. The editors asked specifically for contributions of the sort that ordinarily do not find a ready market — fragments from unfinished work, plays, short novels, narratives in verse, groups of poems and sketches, and short stories which violate some editorial taboo.

The result of this search for original material is embodied in a huge book of 800 closely printed pages, made up of prose and verse from seventy-two contributors. Had the contributors known in advance what the fate of the book would be, I have no doubt that many of them would have been more eager to be represented by their best work. I suspect that most of them expected to receive little or nothing for their contributions, because whatever royalties would be forthcoming had to be distributed pro rata to a great many people.

But the book had the good fortune to be selected by the Literary Guild, which meant an advance order of (I believe) about 25,000 copies, besides the impetus thus given to the sale of the book in the bookstores. The editors were able to send sizable royalty checks to surprised contributors during the first week after the book's publication. One poet, it is said, received $250 for his poem, which was more than he had ever received altogether from magazines during his career as a writer.

The contents of the yearbook are so various and their merits so different that it is impossible to review it within any reasonable limits. Only a few things may be said of the book as applying to the separate contributions and to the book as a whole: the prevailing mood of both the prose and the verse is tragic; the point of view of the writers is disillusioned, sardonic, or pessimistic; there is no humorous relief except Witter Bynner's verses and the subjects are usually life in the raw.

The best things in the book, to my mind, are: "Lazarus Laughed", by Eugene O'Neill, of which only the first act is printed; the suppressed verses from William Ellery Leonard's "Two Lives"; Ernest Hemingway's grim short story, "An Alpine Idyl"; Isadore Schneider's long narrative poem of a misunderstood man, "The Temptation of St. Anthony"; and Edmund Wilson's "Galahad", the story of sex education of an ardent young Y. M. C. A. student.

The O'Neill play is but an appetizing taste of what promises to be O'Neill's most powerful and most unactable tragedy. The Leonard poems leave one rather gasping by their

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unrestraint and shaken by their power. Isadore Schneider has sustained his theme through a long and difficult narrative in verse without any visible flagging of inspiration. Hemingway's "An Alpine Idyl" is about an animal-like peasant who stood the frozen corpse of his wife up in the barn and used the teeth of her open mouth to hang his lantern on while he was working at night. The body could not be buried until the thaws of spring and when the peasant applied to the priest for burial of the body, the priest at first thought the woman had been murdered, because her mouth had been twisted out of shape by the weight of the lantern. The peasant accounted for the twisted mouth stolidly and without seeing anything reprehensible in his actions. A gruesome tale, written with great economy of detail. Wilson's story is a tragi-comedy of the awakening of sex consciousness and a satire upon Y. M. C. A. welfare workers. It seems a little out of date after Wilson's similar treatment of a similar theme in "The Undertaker's Garland" and after Sinclair Lewis' novels; but it is an entertaining bit, with excellent dialogue.

Next in the line of excellence I should place the three stories by Margery Latimer, Edna Bryner, and Gertrude Diamant, all three of them writers whose names, I believe, are unfamiliar to magazine readers and all of them destined for distinguished careers. Much of the material in "The American Caravan" might have appeared in this magazine if it had been submitted to us, so I am inclined to think that it would have been published in others if the authors had used good judgment in choosing the magazines to which they submitted their work. On the other hand there are a number of contributions in the yearbook which I could readily see are not what editors call good magazine material and yet I enjoyed reading them and was glad that the editors of the yearbook had created a place for such material.

"The American Caravan" is to be an annual publication and the editors are to be congratulated both upon their idea and upon its result. So great has been the success of the first volume that they will doubtless have a vast amount of excellent stuff from which to make selections next year. Inevitably they will have to reject some poems, articles and stories as "not quite suited to the present needs of 'The American Caravan', though this rejection does not necessarily imply any lack of merit", and so, in time, another asylum may have to be provided for the homeless manuscripts which not even "The American Caravan" can make place for. The editors of this yearbook are men of taste and culture and they have a healthy enthusiasm for the experimental and unorthodox forms of literary expression. My chief regret upon closing the volume is that the editors themselves did not each contribute some prose or poetry.

* * *

It is Francis Carco's notion that François Villon was a sensitive and well-bred lad, diffident and weak-willed, who came under the domination of evil companions through a pathetic desire to be accepted as a regular fellow. From this apparently sound assumption, M. Carco has written a novel of Villon's life which is illuminating without being especially impressive, and full of fine scenes without being especially dramatic.

It would seem that M. Carco had deliberately suppressed every impulse he had to make Villon the "beloved vagabond" of the popular cinema and musical comedy imagination. As a student of the lower depths of Paris, about whose denizens he has already written one novel, M. Carco is qualified to present a veracious picture of the mental habits and the ways of life among the thieves and panders Villon associated with; and as a poet and a writer of sensitive prose, he is also qualified to portray the soul of an artist under poverty and ugliness.

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# A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

## SINLCAIR REVEALED AND HAWTHORNE OBSCURED

By John Macy

UPTON SINCLAIR: A STUDY IN SOCIAL PROTEST. *By Floyd Dell. Doran. $2.00*
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE: A STUDY IN SOLITUDE. *By Herbert Gorman. Doran. $2.00*

THE first two volumes of the George H. Doran Company's Murray Hill Biographies of American men and women of letters have been published.

Floyd Dell on Upton Sinclair was due to be an excellent combination, and it is. The subject is interesting and the biographer has given it the additional interest of his own personality and fine treatment. He admires his man, praises him enthusiastically where praise is due. But he keeps his balance beautifully, lays a firm friendly hand on Sinclair's faults, and is not guilty of the uncritically warm adulation which leaves the reader of some biographies cold and sceptical about the heroism of the hero. There sits a man (if Sinclair ever has time to sit) portrayed with objective fidelity and the imaginative skill of the true artist in biography. This study in social protest is rather the study of a person, a temperament, and a critical examination of the work of a powerful, original, if defective, artist. The social protest is there because Sinclair has been protesting all his life, and Dell knows thoroughly the society from which his protestant emerged and against which he has fought a continuous winning and losing battle or succession of battles. The book is a history of "radical" thought of the twentieth century and of the "conservative" forces which made and largely defeated that thought.

Twenty years ago, when "The Jungle" took the world by storm, many of us who are contemporary with the now middle-aged but incurably youthful Sinclair were both jubilant and perplexed. We were socialists and we thought the world should be turned upside down by this terrific work. We were literary and we knew that here was a great novel, passionate, terribly beautiful, written by a man who knew how to write, an artist. Then things got mixed up, because life is mixed up, and Sinclair is a paradoxical clarifier and stirrer of the mess. When you went to your friends who were only literary, who, as Bill Haywood used to say, did not know the difference between anarchism and arnica, and when you tried to interest them in the book as a book, a remarkable piece of writing, they could not see it because it was sordid and the work of a socialist, a fellow who had deceived us with the spurious "Journal of Arthur Sterling". And other friends — working socialists, radicals, labor agitators — rejoiced in the book as a tract, a contribution to the "cause", and were not much interested in the fact that an authentic new novelist had appeared in American literature. Some such confusion or contradiction has muddled the career of Sinclair all his life, and the reason is that the confusion is in him as well as in the social order. He is two men, at least two, at war with each other and yet strengthening and inspiring each other.

The artist as propagandist, as reformer, is very old and often met in literature, as Sinclair has shown in his penetrating but characteristically one-sided essay, or pamphlet, "Mammonart: An Essay in Economic Interpretation", which in spite of its sub-title is an original and important essay in literary history and criticism. I have not the book on my shelves, so that I do not recall his examples, but one can easily recall a hundred cases of men who wished to do something for



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or to the world, who expressed themselves so well that they are inscribed in the golden roll of letters (perhaps for other things they wrote in addition to their impassioned beliefs about what is wrong with the world): Milton is a magnificent propagandist who would have a significant place in English prose if he had not written poetry, and what is more, the religious propagandist is strong in "Paradise Lost". Shelley, the ethereal poet of clouds and skylarks, is a reformer, not only in his juvenile piece on atheism and his championship of the cause of Catholic emancipation, but in "Islam" and "Prometheus Unbound", poems of revolt and the liberation of humanity. It will surprise many who know Sinclair only as an annoying muck-raker of meat-factories, coal-mines, colleges, churches, governments, to learn that he is a disciple of Shelley, a lover of poetry, if not in achievement a poet himself. But I am ready to say, partly under the temperate persuasion of Dell, that Sinclair is a genius, an important man of letters.

There is no writer in modern America who groups with him, not Frank Norris, nor Jack London, with whom Georg Brandes grouped him, calling them the three modern American novelists worth reading. In the older American literature are two, the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin", to which Jack London immediately assimilated "The Jungle", and Wendell Phillips. The second comparison will seem strange, since Phillips did not work through any dramatic or fictional or poetic form, but only through exposition and oratory. But this is the resemblance: Phillips tried to reform everything. After the Civil War when his anti-slavery colleagues were contented with the victorious solution, such as it was, Phillips looked for the next thing to tackle. He fought against what is called wage-slavery of the white workers; he fought for woman suffrage; and long before the war he had declared himself in the respectable society of Boston and Cambridge in favor of the Russian nihilists, which is much as if an aristocratic gentleman of our time should support Bolshevism. But the range of Phillips is limited compared to that of Sinclair. There is no evil under the sun, nothing the matter with us from our stomachs to our hearts, to our pocket-books, to our heads, about which Sinclair does not offer curative advice.

He has been so idolized by many kinds of suffering and groping people as well as by readers of his books all over the world that he takes himself with monstrous seriousness. He is an egotist, and yet modest, self-sacrificing (self-sacrifice is a form of egotism), and a gentle, lovable person. His partial failure has been ascribed to his lack of humor. Well, he has not much humor, of our kind, in spite of the fact that in his youth he partly supported himself by selling jokes to comic papers and he has an ironic wit, a Swiftian scorn. And out of his many conflicts, when he seems to be fighting the whole world, he looks upon life with a most engaging smile. And he will go on fighting, I hope as an artist, though it is inconceivable that he will settle down to contentment with the sins of this intolerable world.

Mr. Dell says that Sinclair's new novel "Oil" (I have not yet read it, but I will!) is more mature than "The Jungle" and "restores to us Upton Sinclair the novelist and constitutes one of the great achievements in the literary discovery of contemporary America". That is my dream for the author of "Manassas".

Fifty years ago the oldish-young Henry James wrote a biography of Hawthorne for the "English Men of Letters". It was not a subject congenial to the talent of the greatest American novelist, for James was not in sympathy with Hawthorne, and he never understood the American scene in which Hawthorne moved. The task of writing the book was assigned to James by the British editor, Morley, who chose the most brilliant living American writer of fiction to write about the most eminent dead master of American fiction. James, the infallible critic, did understand the art of Hawthorne and approved it intelligently though not cordially. He set criticism about Hawthorne on a solid foundation of good sense, sane writing, and intellectual if not very warm appreciation. And in the last half-century there has been much good criticism of Haw-

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thorne which a young man may be supposed to have read.

It is incredible, inexplicable, that Mr. Gorman should have written such a bad book. He does not know Hawthorne. He does not know New England. He does not understand the art of fiction. He does not know how to write English. His book is what Mark Twain called Dowden's "Shelley", a literary cake-walk. He uses "urge" in the sense of impulse so many times that it is impossible to count the urges. The lesson to learn from Hawthorne — if the lesson can be learned or taught — is simplicity, the charm and magic of direct speech, freedom from affectation. Mr. Gorman has the worst of literary vices, complexity without subtlety, the high-falutin' without dignity or eloquence. I am not unfair to him in my quotations. For I have not picked the worst. There is a bad sentence on every page. Not bad in grammar or syntax, but bad in meaning, stupid. He can write: "Something called in the distance and perhaps it was literature, but a faintness of virile struggle and an unconscious self-deprecation withheld him from those dominant gestures that might be supposed to forward him on the road to fame", and "How different this is from the coherence of 'The Scarlet Letter' which, though also written in separate scenes, is tightly knit through a single dominating pulse." Make what you can of something tightly knit through a single dominating pulse.

And when Mr. Gorman makes sense, so that we can understand what the words mean, he reminds me of what Fields said to Weber or Weber said to Fields about the transept: "Even then you are wrong". For example: "Reticently, then, like the typically thin-lipped New Englander he kept his counsels to himself until fortune might indicate more clearly his probable path". The New Englander is not thin-lipped or thick-lipped. Hawthorne, as his picture shows, was rather thick-lipped. The New Englander is of all kinds and sorts, like other human beings. Nowadays the Puritan has become a sort of cartoon figure, a literary superstition which men like Mr. Gorman do not know because they do not read history.

The mythical shadow of Hawthorne Mr. Gorman meticulously adumbrates against the meticulous urge of Puritan urgency upon which his delicate penumbra impinges with the delicate sensitiveness of solitude. But it is not necessary or quite just to parody Mr. Gorman. He does it himself. "An aesthete came to the surface in Hawthorne and dominated an obliqueness of mind that had, in other years, dominated its thin-lipped victims." Which means nothing. "Gallows Hill in Salem is the Golgotha from whence come streaming all the spearmen of intolerant American reform." Which is not so. American reform did not originate in Salem any more than it originated in Providence or Boston or New York.

Hawthorne was a man. He was sometimes lonely. He was not a spook. Mr. Gorman denatures Hawthorne, the person and the author. In Hawthorne's character there were glooms and mysteries, and he was fond of the urges of adumbrations. But the way for a critic to get at him is to clarify the adumbrations in the light of Hawthorne's notes and stories, which are models of clarity, directness, simplicity. That is why he is a great artist.

If Hawthorne had read some of Mr. Gorman's sentences he would probably have spat and cursed, taken another drink of rum, and then gone off for a walk meditating with the urging sensitiveness of a pre-Victorian Salem Puritan a few chaste and transparent sentences "translating the personages of the narrative into sensibilities trembling on the verge of an unseen world". A dreamer is almost always a clear thinker, the poet is usually a man of good sense, not a mysterious freak. It is the little critic who creates bewildering marvels, a blackness more black than the blackness. Switch on the light!

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## THE PASTIME OF PEEKING

### By Louis Sherwin

THE DIARY OF HENRY TEONGE. *Harper & Bros.* (The Broadway Travellers). *$3.00.*
A FLORENTINE DIARY. *By Lucca Landucci. E. P. Dutton & Co. $3.00.*
THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM MACLAY, *with an introduction by Charles A. Beard. Albert & Charles Boni. $4.00.*
THE DIARY OF RUSSELL BERESFORD, *edited by Cecil Roberts. Doran. $2.50.*

HENRY TEONGE was an obscure chaplain in the British Navy during the reign of Charles II. His diary, written for his own amusement while afloat, has a charm almost Pepysian.

Teonge, a rural English vicar, took a chaplain's job to escape his creditors. A cheery, eupeptic soul, he enjoyed his cup of sack, punch or "rackee" as much as any hardened post-captain in the service and evidently drank flagon for flagon with the best of them. Being a clergyman of the Church of England he had, of course, not the remotest resemblance to a Y. M. C. A. secretary. Whatever the limitations of the Church of England, her parsons have at least been always bred to the speech, tastes and manners of gentlemen. Teonge, consequently, was welcomed in places where a soul-saver could not have blasted his way in with a culverin.

His record is full of the quality that David Hannay commends in Pepys: "the unconscious humor which is never absent from a truthful account of the workings of nature in the average sensual man".

His descriptions of life, manners, menues and customs in Levantine ports are delightfully naïve. And our little chaplain was no non-combatant either. The ships on which he served were cruising, under the command of Sir John Narbrough, in pursuit of Tripolitan and Algerine corsairs.

"I make cartridges for my own staff gun and some for muskets also," he says on one occasion. And again: "I went up on the poop with my staff gun and stood by our Lieutenant Monck . . . he bade me fire at them, which I did . . . &c".

His only vice was the making of bad verses, very badly diluted Herrick for the most part. But he never thrusts his profession down anybody's throat. "Good Easter Day. I preached a sermon: Mark xvi, 9", or "Prayers, but no sermon, for our Captain went ashore", are the limit of his allusions to his trade. Evidently the captain was the only person aboard in serious need of homiletic ministrations.

A gallant, sympathetic divine, this Teonge. Probably even his sermons were endurable. And what a noble trencherman! The document has been transcribed and well edited by G. E. Manwaring.

Interesting in a vastly differing fashion is the diary of Lucca Landucci, a prosperous apothecary of Florence during some of the bloodiest years of that sinister and brilliant republic. It covers the period from 1450 to 1516, after which it was brought down to 1542 by an anonymous writer. Translated into lucid English by Alice de Rosen Jervis, it has a preface and notes by Iodoco del Badia.

To historians this work is no novelty, as the material it contains has long since been checked up and used. But this is the first publication in our language. An enthralling, macabre chronicle, the more so because of the character of its writer. Landucci was a cagey old bourgeois, realizing thoroughly the good health that lay in obscurity, at a time when eminence invited the stake or a dagger in the back. Evidently a sincere follower of Savonarola, he was careful to keep his admiration to himself when they burned that prototype of Billy Sunday in front of the Palagio de' Signori. Though urged by his friends to take public office, the good apothecary preferred to conduct his shop in as much peace as constant wars and uprisings afforded.

What an amusing contrast is the character of William Maclay. A dour, opinionated unbending old Scotch-Irishman, he had a capacity for scorn and hatred that even Frank Harris might envy. This journal of his covers the years 1789–91 when he was United States Senator from Pennsylvania. It adds little to our knowledge of American history or the best accepted modern conceptions of the republic's early magnificoes.

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But, uncharming and uninviting as the portrait he unwittingly paints of himself, I find it difficult to lay down. We all know that John Adams, for all his gifts, was a ludicrously little-minded potentate, unable to resist the glamor of titles and resounding names or words. We all know that the Early Fathers, for all their renown, were frequently addicted to the absurdities of peanut politicians. But the vividness and detail with which Maclay records their bickerings and tradings are merciless beyond words. Listen to him a moment on the subject of Adams:

"Next to him (the President), on his right sat Bonny Johnny Adams, ever and anon mantling his visage with the most unmeaning simper that ever dimpled the face of folly. Goddess of Nature, forgive me if I censure thee for that thou madest him not a tailor, so full of small attentions is he."

And of Jefferson: "His whole figure has a loose, shackling air. He had a rambling vacant look. . . . I looked for gravity, but a laxity of manner seemed shed about him. He spoke almost without ceasing. But even his discourse partook of his personal demeanour. It was loose and rambling, and yet he scattered information wherever he went and some even brilliant sentiments sparkled from him".

But the chief impression this journal leaves is of the infinite pathos of Maclay himself. In that first Congress he seems not to have had a single friend. And no wonder, for he would not stir a finger or bend an inch to make one. A profound admirer of Washington's, he would hardly respond to the most elementary amenities of civil intercourse for fear of seeming to be "one of the courtiers".

And with it all the old fellow was rigidly, painfully honest. He constituted himself the watchdog of the Treasury. Hamilton he hated venomously. Maclay's honesty as often as not led him to the limits of pettiness, particularly in the case of Steuben. For all his solid virtues, you can't blame Maclay's colleagues for being bored by the nagging old curmudgeon, nor his constituents for preferring a less virtuous but more genial successor. This edition has a new and illuminating preface by Charles A. Beard.

The Diary of Russell Beresford makes good reading, but I take leave to doubt its authenticity. Ostensibly it is the journal of a young English archaeologist of good family, edited by Cecil Roberts, the author of "Sails of Sunset" and "Scissors". "It is obvious," says Mr. Roberts, "that a diary of so intimate a nature and of a date so recent that living persons are in it could not be published without a change of names." I suppose this is a device legitimate enough. At any rate I see no harm in it, but what the devil is all the shooting about? To my mind this is a lazy manner of concocting a work of fiction, and if the character of Russell Beresford, as invented by Mr. Roberts, were not fairly engaging the stunt would be irritating.

The story is simple. Our young archaeologue meets a charming young American grass widow. In fact she forces her acquaintance on him and pursues him unmercifully. Having captured him effectually she indulges for several months in the process vulgarly known as teasing. She is a good Roman Catholic, cannot divorce, dee-dee-dow, dee-dee-dow. Finally she yields, they have a brief, blissful liaison and the hero dies of a cerebral haemorrhage.

Best of all in the book I like a criticism of Flaubert's tiresomely overrated Salammbô. I've wanted to say something of the sort for years but lacked the scholarship to back it up. "What a preposterous book!" says Mr. Roberts' Beresford. "It reads like the scenario for a Hollywood film, and he is never happy unless wallowing in warm blood and sadistic details. Flaubert chose his place and period with foresight, knowing there could be little documentary and material evidence to shackle him. . . . His boastful claim to research and accuracy only makes him ridiculous. . . . Even his geography . . . is bungled. He lavishes his eloquence on the rising of the moon between the two horns of the Djebel-bou-Kornein. It has never done so since the creation of the world and couldn't without a change in our planetary system."

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How beloved Jim Huneker, the Flaubertolater — the peace of Allah to his ashes — would rage!

## AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLIN' DOWN

### By Countee Cullen

GOD'S TROMBONES. *By James Weldon Johnson. Viking Press. $2.50.*

*"And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns; and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.*

*"And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat. . . ."*

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON has blown the true spirit and the pentecostal trumpeting of the dark Joshuas of the race in "God's Trombones", composed of seven sermon-poems and a prayer. The seven sermons are like the seven blasts blown by Joshua at Jericho. "The Creation", "The Prodigal Son", "Go Down Death — A Funeral Sermon", "Noah Built the Ark", "The Crucifixion", "Let My People Go", and "The Judgment Day", they are all great evangelical texts. And the magnificent manner in which they are done increases our regret that Mr. Johnson was not intrigued into preaching "The Dry Bones In the Valley", the *pièce de résistance* in the repertoire of every revivalist to whom a good shout is a recommendation of salvation well received.

An experiment and an intention lie behind these poems. It will be remembered that in "The Book of American Negro Poetry" Mr. Johnson spoke of the limitations of dialect, which he compared to an organ having but two stops, one of humor and one of pathos. He felt that the Negro poet needed to discover some medium of expression with a latitude capable of embracing the Negro experience. These poems were written with that purpose in view, as well as to guarantee a measure of permanence in man's most forgetful mind to that highly romantic and fast disappearing character, the old time Negro preacher.

The poet here has admirably risen to his intentions and his needs; entombed in this bright mausoleum the Negro preacher of an older day can never pass entirely deathward. Dialect could never have been synthesized into the rich mortar necessary for these sturdy unrhymed exhortations. Mr. Johnson has captured that peculiar flavor of speech by which the black sons of Zebedee, lacking academic education, but grounded through their religious intensity in the purest marshalling of the English language (the King James' version of the Bible) must have astounded men more obviously letter-trained. This verse is simple and awful at once, the grand diapason of a musician playing on an organ with far more than two keys.

There is a universality of appeal and appreciation in these poems that raises them, despite the fact that they are labeled "Seven Negro Sermons in Verse", and despite the persistent racial emphasis of Mr. Douglas' beautiful illustrations, far above a relegation to any particular group or people. Long ago the recital of the agonies and persecutions of the Hebrew children under Pharaoh ceased to chronicle the tribulations of one people alone. So in "Let My People Go" there is a world-wide cry from the oppressed against the oppressor, from the frail and puny against the arrogant in strength who hold them against their will. From Beersheba to Dan the trusting wretch, rich in nothing but his hope and faith, holds this an axiomatic solace:

Listen! — Listen!
All you sons of Pharaoh,
Who do you think can hold God's people
When the Lord himself has said,
Let my people go?

In considering these poems one must pay unlimited respect to the voice Mr. Johnson has recorded, and to the pliable and agony-racked audience to whom those great black trombones blared their apocalyptic revelations, and their terrible condemnation of the

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world, the flesh, and the devil. Theirs was a poetic idiom saved, by sincerity and the heritage of a colorful imagination, from triteness. If in "Listen, Lord", they addressed the Alpha and Omega of things in a manner less reverent than the frigidity of the Christian's universal prayer, it is not to be doubted that their familiarity was bred not of contempt, but of the heart-felt liberty of servitors on easy speaking terms with their Master. What people not so privileged could apostrophize Christ so simply and so humanly as merely "Mary's Baby"?

In like manner certain technical crudities and dissonances can be explained away. The interpolation here and there of a definitely rhymed couplet among the lines of this vigorous free and easy poetry will not jar, when one reflects that if poetry is the language of inspiration, then these black trumpeters, manna-fed and thirst-assuaged by living water from the ever flowing rock, could well be expected to fly now and then beyond their own language barriers into the realms of poetic refinements of which they knew nothing, save by intuitive inspiration. And if on occasion the preacher ascended from *you* and *your* to *thee* and *thou*, this too is in keeping with his character.

To me "The Creation" and "Go Down Death" are unqualifiedly great poems. The latter is a magnificent expatiation and interpretation of the beatitudes; it justifies Job's "I know in Whom I have believed" to all the weary, sorrow-broken vessels of earth. It is a revelation of to what extent just men shall be made perfect. The repetitions in "The Crucifixion" are like hammer-strokes of agony.

It is a tribute to Mr. Johnson's genius that when a friend of mine recently read "Go Down Death" to an audience in Mr. Johnson's own natal town, an old wizened black woman, the relic of a day of simpler faith and more unashamed emotions than ours, wept and shouted. Perhaps many a modern pastor, logically trained and multi-degreed, might retrieve a scattering flock, hungry for the bread of the soul, by reading one of these poems as a Sunday service.

## THE LEAN SEASON

### By Emanuel Eisenberg

AMERICAN POETRY, 1927 — A MISCELLANY. *Harcourt. $2.50.*
RUSTIC ELEGIES. *By Edith Sitwell. Knopf. $1.50.*
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF BLAKE. *By Max Plowman. Dutton. $2.50.*

IT is pretty safe to assume that any new anthology of poetry is compiled, edited or arranged by Louis Untermeyer. "American Poetry, 1927", however, is merely supervised by him. He insists that the collection — of which this is the fourth annual volume — is entirely the work of the individual poets represented and that his chief rôle in bringing the book into the world has been that of secretary. We must therefore conclude, dolefully enough, that the separate choices were made by the authors themselves in purposeful effort to exhibit their best new writings.

It is a dismal showing.

There is a tenacious level of empty competence here and an obedient living-up-to-standard that induce immeasurable depression when one recalls the bright exciting days of 1913. Rather than a renaissance or even the first authentic birth, it was the beginning of labor pains. The seed that Whitman had planted was manifesting the activity of its slow product. So far only Robinson Jeffers has emerged. Jeffers cannot be considered an auspicious herald. Though he has attained magnificence and will scale greater heights than any other poet of this country, he is utterly unAmerican. His unremittant abhorrence for humanity's surely dispensable pettiness and the grim disbelief in any eventual good (or happiness or beauty) out of a banded society will always prevent the United States from accepting him as a supreme, genuine expression of its essence.

Three other new contributors join this collection: Léonie Adams, Nathalia Crane, Archibald Macleish. The first, serenely intricate in her record of natural phenomena, has very little to say and is preoccupied (like so many other young poets) with mere avoidance of triteness rather than with creation of her own special vocabulary; the

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second continues the quaint laborious whimsicalities for which she has already obtained an audience but which rarely succeed in entertaining this ungracious reviewer; the third is simple, earnest, and quite unimportant.

For the rest we merely have those in the front ranks repeat their familiar performances. Conrad Aiken, H. D., Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, Elinor Wylie and the rest still function: that is all that can be said for them. There are no revelations here; no rich morsels for the starved, avid throat. Edna Millay has taken care to be represented by exactly three sonnets. It was a move of uncanny prescience.

Edith Sitwell, whose favorite indoor sport is reviewer-baiting, is going to have a perfectly elegant time with me, for I dislike her latest volume "Rustic Elegies" vigorously — almost as vigorously, indeed, as I disliked the former volumes. It is totally undistinguished and scarcely likely to assist the lady's somewhat flamboyant reputation.

I have no prejudicial objection to the well-oiled, highly-polished, smoothly-running quatrain. I even acknowledge that it is possible to attain excellence with it. But Miss Sitwell never gets beyond efficient operation — never, in fact, seems to strive for more than even rhythms and correct rhymes. It is extraordinary how steadily one can read this book, and for how long, without encountering a single unusual idea or startling emotion or anything but an occasional amiably grotesque phrase — such as "pears and apples furred as Russians", which first appeared as a preposterous strain for rhyme with "repercussions"; but the phrase is used four or five times further, which of course disarms suspicion or ridicule.

Miss Sitwell, who has no intention of being known simply as a rhymester, grows alarmingly philosophical toward the end of the book — and then explains, in a Marianne-Mooreish note, that the substance of her reflections may be found in the Anthroposophical Review for Easter, 1926, and in Rudolph Steiner's "Christianity as Mystical Fact".

Some day I mean to look up these references and compare. Some day, that is, when I have nothing much to do.

"An Introduction to the Study of Blake" is neither the groundwork of a study nor an introduction to a study, but a great deal of discussion about what Mr. Plowman intends to write when he gets around to composing a book on the life or times or art of William Blake.

Blake has had little recognition and almost no understanding and there is far too little interest in him among us today; but this is not plausible reason for prefacing every statement about him (well, *nearly* every statement) with apologies to the effect that he is difficult of comprehension and assurances of the unique value of his "messages". Mr. Plowman is much too evasive to evoke the confidence of the reader.

The accusation of madness in Blake is here wholly discredited; Mr. Plowman insists that his extraordinary individuality of vision and his renunciation of the literary modes of the day render him a being absolutely apart from all other poets. The symbols — the capitalization of ordinary words to represent larger, subtler, almost inexplicable conceptions — are, Mr. Plowman holds, Blake's way of achieving a fresh and intimately personal and yet untormented vocabulary — the desire of all those who know intricate feelings that cry insistently for expression.

In the early part of this volume there are clarity and brightness and warm intelligence; but in the latter section, where "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" and "The Four Zoas" are expounded, Mr. Plowman lapses into a fatal professorial dullness: the patience and reiteration and longwindedness of the academic librarian.

## A PHILOSOPHER'S STORY

**By Herbert J. Seligmann**

TRANSITION. A SENTIMENTAL STORY OF ONE MIND AND ONE ERA. *By Will Durant. Simon and Schuster. $2.50.*

IN his autobiographic tale Dr. Durant hardly escapes the philosopher's habit. He is so intent upon possibility and gen-

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eralities that the particular often seems to elude him. At the very outset of the book, as he recalls his childhood, he remembers a baseball that crashed through his father's window. Do we hear the fracture of glass? Not even a tinkle! But "we knew that in these hilarious ceremonies America expressed one element of its spontaneous religion". My guess is that there may have been some swearing at the ball and the boys who threw it.

The philosopher seems intent, as may be proper, upon the drama of ideas within himself. He is tortured over his own youthful drift from Catholicism toward free-thinking and anarchism. We are given a hint of the family tragedy and of the personal contacts it involved. His progress leads him through radicalism, political action, and disillusion to the safe haven of marriage, parenthood and an irrational content which influences even his philosophy.

It is perhaps a dubious compliment to pay to a piece of autobiographic writing — as to a woman — to say that it is honest. The very compliment implies something omitted, even from honesty. One craves a sense of immediacy, power, an inexpressible enthralment. Dr. Durant may have got a bloody nose in a boy-fight or he may have visited Venice; but these incidents are not organically part of his book, episodes as they were in his life. In this lonely progress within a world that rarely becomes real with the passion of the seer and writer, is a succession of names, places, theories, shadowy, pale, unborn in any such sense as are the people and situations in great novels we have lived through.

One feels that Dr. Durant has been genuine in his wish to set down a spiritual history; that enough of the honesty of the confessional has remained with him to lead him to attempt most difficult bits of self-revelation.

Yet mastery of the word seems lacking. It is personal record, often undistinguished, rather than living moments, that we are given. Where his emotions were profoundly roused, as in the danger of his wife's childbirth, the writer is at his best and simplest.

Perhaps Dr. Durant has failed to write a novel because he wanted to cover too much ground, the history of the ideas and movements he encountered. So he failed to go deep enough to touch the profound tragic rhythm that underlies and motivates great expressions of life. His sentiment in face of actuality remains bourgeois. His women, even his men, are names rather than people. And the result of this progress "Vom Himmel durch die Welt zur Hölle" is what? At the last we see the philosopher happily married. He loves his wife. He adores his little daughter. "Daddy, aren't you through with that old book yet?" Basking in this domestic bliss he concludes that all is not so hopeless as it might be. A sort of middle-class content furnishes the basis for optimism about America and the world.

It is easier, perhaps, to tell the story of philosophy than one's own experience. Or it may be that such a thing as an individual is obsolete in this age of cyphers; and that we are to find symbolic expression of that fact in Dr. Durant's book.

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# THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

*Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Coöperation with the Public Libraries of America*

*In the between-seasons period of late summer, in which this month's score is compiled, any change in the record sufficient to excite more than ordinary interest is always rare. There certainly is nothing of the sort in the fiction list this month, while in the general list the only new addition is one which was inevitable. It is currently reported that the publishers of "We" expect to sell at least a quarter of a million copies of this plain, straightforward and modest autobiography of the youthful hero of the moment. "Lindy" himself has proved unexpectedly durable for a sky-rocket hero. At this writing the young man does not seem to have let his foot slip even once; and unless that happens, which now seems unlikely, "We" appears predestined for as long a run as, say, the writings of Edward Bok, Bruce Barton or H. G. Wells which have 'made the Score' for years on end. Meantime, the scramble for top place in the general list between the three leaders of this month is so close that there are not more than ten points out of six-hundred odd to choose between them. — F. P. S.*

## FICTION

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Elmer Gantry | *Sinclair Lewis* | HARCOURT |
| 2. | Sorrell and Son | *Warwick Deeping* | KNOPF |
| 3. | An American Tragedy | *Theodore Dreiser* | LIVERIGHT |
| 4. | Twilight Sleep | *Edith Wharton* | APPLETON |
| 5. | Doomsday | *Warwick Deeping* | KNOPF |
| 6. | The Old Countess | *Anne Douglas Sedgwick* | HOUGHTON |
| 7. | Lost Ecstasy * | *Mary Roberts Rinehart* | DORAN |
| 8. | Galahad | *John Erskine* | BOBBS |
| 9. | Marching On * | *James Boyd* | SCRIBNER |
| 10. | Beau Geste | *Percival C. Wren* | STOKES |
| 11. | The Immortal Marriage | *Gertrude Atherton* | LIVERIGHT |
| 12. | The Sea Gull | *Kathleen Norris* | DOUBLEDAY |

## GENERAL

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | The Story of Philosophy | *Will Durant* | SIMON |
| 2. | The Royal Road to Romance | *Richard Halliburton* | BOBBS |
| 3. | Revolt in the Desert | *T. E. Lawrence* | DORAN |
| 4. | Why We Behave Like Human Beings | *George A. Dorsey* | HARPER |
| 5. | Napoleon | *Emil Ludwig* | LIVERIGHT |
| 6. | The Glorious Adventure | *Richard Halliburton* | BOBBS |
| 7. | This Believing World | *Lewis Browne* | MACMILLAN |
| 8. | The Revolt of Modern Youth | *Lindsey and Evans* | LIVERIGHT |
| 9. | The Man Nobody Knows | *Bruce Barton* | BOBBS |
| 10. | The Book Nobody Knows | *Bruce Barton* | BOBBS |
| 11. | "We" * | *Charles A. Lindbergh* | PUTNAM |
| 12. | The Christ of the Indian Road | *E. Stanley Jones* | ABINGDON |

* This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.



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# IN BRIEF REVIEW

THE American temperament has been in the coals and under the glass and on the pan so many times that it seems anything further would have to mean reiteration or boredom. The precise quality of humor, however, of tolerance and of unabashed clarity, which makes up the fabric of Frederick Hazlitt's *God Got One Vote* (Simon and Schuster, $2.50) is a unique thing in the gallery of its associates. We see the country here through the rise of a boss politician and there is surely in that plenty of opportunity for cynicism and clever mischief. Not so with Mr. Brennan's picture of Boss Van Hoos. Pat is a real person and not a stock clown, even if he is a politician. He enters politics on the night before the McKinley election by virtue of a good old saloon brawl, and is immediately elevated from hod-carrier to ward-heeler and incidentally city contractor. He rises quickly and becomes eventually city Boss, wealthy and powerful, but still the old rough and lumbering Pat, despite the efforts of the refined lady who has made herself his wife. Pat's efforts to bring his simple, direct-thinking mind to understand "reform" are a real study in philosophy. Rigid honesty is intrinsic with him and in its various manifestations forms almost the entire content of his ethical code, but "reform" as it spreads over the land, is a baffling problem. The reformers cry "Ten million of you have cast your ballots and God got one vote!" and Pat is sorely troubled as to what it all means. He works his way into something like understanding, however, and becomes more and more the embodiment of that realistic idealism, an idealism which sees heaven in terms of earth, which is the author's interpretation of the national mind. Pat's friends are entertaining, his career is interesting, his revelation of the system in American politics is decidedly enlightening, but it is Pat himself that is most important. He deserves his place in the American gallery.

Every once in a while a forward child of this precocious generation writes a book. And so we have *Marriage of Harlequin*, by Pamela Frankau (Harper, $2.00) from the typewriter of an eighteen year old literary lady. Unlike some of her forerunners she has precedent behind her and at her right hand. Her grandmother was Frank Danby and her father is Gilbert Frankau, a best seller in England and not unknown on American department store book counters. In her own right Miss Frankau is said to be a London newspaper woman.

The hero is a sleek young rake of no visible morals and several invisible escapades with subjugated women. It is to be suspected in this connection that an impressionable young author has been influenced by his prototype of the cinema where tall young devils in evening clothes flicker so ravishingly. Be that as it may, this fascinating scamp marries for money in taking Sydney Sherne to wife. Sydney also writes a book at eighteen and has a famous novelist grandmother. So much for autobiography in fiction form. The rest is the old problem of getting two hearts to beat as one.

In reviewing a book of this sort the danger is of becoming patronizing. Of course, the drinking, smoking and petting are exaggerated, but that is just youth's natural desire to show off a knowledge of life. Pamela Frankau is young, but she is going to outgrow it nicely. There are whole pages of amazing maturity.

If a short memory serves it was Arthur Guy Empey who was responsible for the first of the war books. Now with the poppies fading in Flanders' fields he steps forward again, this time with *A Helluva War* (Appleton, $2.00) a comedy of life among the frolicsome doughboys of 1917. The conflict is far enough away to be funny after ten healing years.

U. S. Cavalryman Terence X. O'Leary is as Irish as a shamrock and twice as green. He is the world's unluckiest liar and a boob for blunders. Up and down the otherwise peaceful Western Front he goes blindly charg-



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ing, wreaking far more havoc amid his hereditary enemies the British than in the gray ranks of the Germans opposite. No American heart will swell and burst with pride at his doubtful deeds. But when he is drunk — which is as often as he can get it — he is a tolerable fighter for any man's army. His cronies and chief tormentors are a kilted Scot and a cockney Englishman.

"A Helluva War" won't fetch any chuckles up from the region of the diaphragm, but it is good for a number of smiles. No doubt of it, O'Leary is a character. This reviewer likes Empey's description of infantry coming up under the red belch of the protecting guns better than his slapstick humor.

James Stuart Montgomery's *Tall Men* (Greenberg, $2.00), offers a good Civil War novel, a sea-yarn staged on the deck of a Confederate blockade-runner. A Federal naval officer of Southern birth agonizes in the execution of conscience-imposed duties as a Yankee spy, but dies happy when his attempt to seize the ship — commanded by Captain Merry (really Captain Merrihew, R.N.) — is foiled. In the presence of his wife, who respects but does not love him (she has given her heart to Captain Merry), he is forgiven by the man whom he tried to betray as first mate for a dishonor which rooted in honor stood. Fluently and energetically written, it is a tale of gentlemen all (save, perhaps, the Yankee consul at St. George's), and is told by an old English gentlemen supposed to have been a volunteer supercargo on the blockade-runner. The struggle between the Kearsarge and the Alabama supplies a cannonading climax. It would have been quite in accord with the dramatic verities, however, to have let Captain Merry and beautiful Marcia Tempest step before the altar. Instead, Mr. Montgomery adds Merry to brave Captain Semmes' battle casualties. Yet the story is well told, with authentic human as well as period flavor, even if the author felt he had to offer his hero as a final libation to the lost cause of the Confederacy.

Hovering between the fanciful turns of a pleasant idyl and the cleverness necessary in a modern novel about Paris and the Quarter, *Mr. Paname, A Paris Fantasia,* by Sisley Huddleston (Doran, $2.00), falls disturbingly between the two, a little inclined to the side of the former. A pleasant idyl, as it dances on its way, must be as light as air, no matter how significant may be the meaning of its steps, and too many words and too tangible an earnestness cannot but weigh it down. A novel of Montparnasse, on the other hand, when it is realistic enough to have celebrities in its cast so slightly disguised as to be readily recognizable, should have the natural sparkle of reality, and unnatural conversations and self-conscious heaviness make this likewise impossible.

Mr. Paname, a Sentimental Observer of life, is snatched from the pit to the stage and becomes an active participant when he falls in love with the beautiful interpreter of the Dance in the Silence. As we go through the pages with him we meet his amusing friends and watch their amusing antics, the best of which is the foray between the Montmartrois and the Montrougeois for the possession of a windmill. The citizens of Montrouge carry off the little moulin, with the help of pikes and spades and pickaxes, but have to pay for their victory by standing a round of drinks for all the warriors of Montmartre. Paris is an exciting and a glorious city in this little fantasy, but though the author's love

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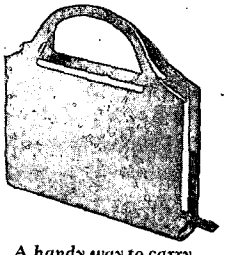

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for his subject and his knowledge of it are undisputed, the inadequacy of his instruments remains to prejudice his efforts.

*Let's Go to the Movies*, by Iris Barry (Payson & Clarke, $3.00) analyzes the second largest industry in the United States. Miss Barry is the youthful English critic of what she, of course, calls the cinema. The problem of better pictures she tackles intelligently and thoroughly. She has seen thousands of films, yet keeps her enthusiasms green for thousands still to flicker.

America is her target and rightly, since we are the biggest of the manufacturers of the celluloid that comes in cans. Chiefly she regrets the star system and the continual emphasis on sex relations. Neither does she hesitate to criticize the histrionic ability of certain of our delineators of the more or less silent drama. Lovely ears will burn and manly chests inflate indignantly in Hollywood when "Let's Go to the Movies" first appears on the lot. But others of the camera crowd, dissected, meet with her professional approval.

In places the reading is not quite as light and carefree as the title would indicate. The morons in the audience won't be able to go the whole distance with Miss Barry when she starts discussing the learned adjuncts to picture-making such as space rhythms, related time and the three dimensions. Yet such references are but a trifling percentage of the mass of material she has sorted from her experience.

The book gives an interesting sidelight on what one qualified English observer thinks of America's screen stars.

In reality *The Road to Paris*, by Michael Monahan (Frank-Maurice, $4.00) marks the end of a rainbow. It took more than thirty years for Monahan to realize his dream of visiting his beloved France, and blessedly he was not disillusioned at the dream's delayed fruition. But once he got started the road stretched beyond Paris and over the Alps into Italy — Rome, Florence and Venice, then back to Paris for a last lingering look before sailing for home again.

This volume is a reprint of what was evidently an unsatisfactory first edition and is amplified by additional chapters and footnotes. Mr. Monahan begins by promising not to write a guide book, and he keeps his word fairly well. Yet he succumbs to art, cathedrals, ruins and history. He walks entertainingly with kings and their consorts, poets and priests, saints and soldiers. And there was actually one living link. He fed carp in the fish pond at Fontainebleau that were alive during the great days of Napoleon.

Yet despite what he dubs miles of masterpieces Monahan was on a holiday, frankly the seeker after happiness, lover of beauty and exponent of that will-o'-the-wisp, personal liberty. He was a singer of songs on his travels — samples of the Michael Monahan verse are included in the text wherever his other muse feels like intruding on his prose — and he was the avowed enemy of Volstead and all his works. So much so that in every place he visited he gloried in obeying the Biblical injunction and took a little wine for his stomach's sake.

But the old trio of wine, women and song was broken squarely in the middle. The young female of Europe left him cold. He remarked but one pretty woman in Rome and the mustachios of the French mademoiselles spoiled their charms for the man from America. Indeed it was a marble woman — the statue of Venus of Milo in the Louvre — that quickened his middle-aged heart beats. He liked to reach out and touch the great pieces of sculpture that he stood in awe before. For here was a warmly emotional Irishman. At Passy, in Balzac's house, he stooped to kiss that master's desk on departing and more than once he wept on other historic sites.

If our modern Western civilization first began to stir during the tenth century, its initial development was well under way by the twelfth, and Martha J. Ross Teel's *Twelfth Century Characters and Characteristics* (Four Seas Company, $3.00) is an endeavor to summarize the intellectual, aesthetic, political and cultural life of this period in connection with the lives of Bernard of Clairvaux, Henry II of England and Roger I of Sicily, the greatest men of their



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time. Her choice of great men is logical, yet seven of the fourteen chapters are devoted to Bernard, which might seem disproportionate if they did not reveal the era itself, its vanities and vices, reflected in the acts and writings of one whom Storrs in his "Life" calls the most commanding man in Europe for a whole generation. As a special study — though one may not always agree with the author's pen-pictures of individual historic characters — the book has very definite merits. Its style is clear; its subject-matter interestingly presented; there is a good bibliography; and the two last chapters are of special value. The first deals with education during the first half of the twelfth century, with special reference to Moslem Spain and France; the second with the status of women and twelfth century literature.

Persistent memories of the Arabian Nights as visioned in a boyhood spent in the prairie town of Abilene, Kansas, finally drove W. B. Seabrook to the Arabian desert. And his *Adventures in Arabia* (Harcourt, $3.00), if it cannot pretend to that peculiarly minute and detailed intimacy and unique personal flavor which makes Doughty's "Arabia Deserta" stand out among studies of the land and its people, is nevertheless a very real book, vividly and colorfully alive, even if at times it has a slightly melodramatic flavor.

There cannot, of course, be any comparison with Lawrence's "Revolt in the Desert", for all that some of Lawrence's Arabian friends and comrades-at-arms reappear in Mr. Seabrook's pages. To the former Arabia was a "cause", and he wrote of it with the white heat and fervor of the man who had constituted himself its prophet. To the latter Arabia was an "adventure", and as he says: "I went for the joy of it and because I believed I would love it". Yet his volume, though it necessarily moves on a lower plane of inspiration, is so sincere, honest and actual in its sympathetic record of every passing impression that it rises above the ruck and truck of "travel books".

The tone throughout is healthily frank, and enjoyably free from moralizing — examples are the author's story of his impromptu acceptance as a Mohammedan, a true believer, because he was not a believer in the


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*Dr. Burton*

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divinity of Christ — and his accounts of the manners and morals of the Arabian women who, it seems, are largely responsible for making sheiks sheiks in a quite American sense. Aside from the seven chapters devoted to the Bedouins, we have three dealing with the Druses, at whose Sultan's palace the author was a guest; three on the whirling dervishes of Syrian Tripoli; and three — and they are highly interesting — describing the Yezidees, the devil-worshippers who live in the mountains north of Baghdad, their Mir or prince still (in theory, at any rate) claiming the *jus primae noctis* where the tribal virgins are concerned, whose "native worth and honor" is guarded by locked waist-corsets of jewelled silver, "one of which", says the author, "I have now in my actual possession". Numerous excellent photographs add to the attractiveness of a volume whose authenticity of flavor is one of its greatest charms.

Dr. Tonks in his "History of Italian Painting" (Appleton, $4.00), covers seventeen centuries of achievement in a handy volume of 430 pages, combining college text-book, general reader's outline, and tourist's picture guide. Yet he has not fallen between his several stools, but has dealt with his subject in a clear, interesting way, with reliable valuations of individual artists and schools, from the catacomb painters to the "Little Masters" of Venice.

Lost Atlantis — until science shall have proved the actual place of its existence beyond all possibility of doubt — will continue to form the subject of more or less romantic hypotheses. Edwin Björkman, the English translator of Strindberg, is the most recent author to discover a new local habitation for Plato's vanished Utopia, in his *The Search for Atlantis* (Knopf, $2.00), modestly admitting that his little work is a layman's excursion among "old legends and new discoveries".

It is true that he has constructed a theory "based on researches into classical literature and modern archaeology". But then, so has every one else. Researches of a similar kind led Dr. Leo Frobenius to discover Atlantis in West Africa; Berlioux in the Atlas Mountains; Bailly in hypoborean Siberia; and Bory de Saint-Vincent in the Canary Islands, to mention but a few instances; and to ignore entirely the writers of the Donnelly school, whose conjectures, after all, have the greatest amount of indirect scientific support, and who place the lost islands of Atlantis hundreds of fathoms below the keels of the ocean greyhounds crossing "the Pond".

Mr. Björkman's engaging little volume of a hundred odd pages has at least the merit of proposing a theory entirely new. In a highly readable manner he tries to make us believe that Atlantis was really the Odyssian island of Scheria, where lovely, white-armed Nausicaä met the Wanderer on the Phaeacian strand; that Scheria is identical with the Tarshish of the Bible and the Tartessos of Herodotus, and that they were none other than a city twin of Carthaginian Gades, the present-day Cadiz. After Tartessos had long flourished side by side with Gades at the mouth of the Guadalquivir, it fell into decay subsequent to the clogging of its waterways, and because the Carthaginian rulers of Spain favored Gades as a port, and so vanished. As the author says: "Atlantis was lost as completely as if it had perished beneath the waves".

Mr. Björkman's theory is plausible, and plausibly told. It is quite as plausible as Frobenius' idea, based on Joruba Negro terracotta and bronze-work, and the fact that practically the whole content of Plato's accounts of Atlantis exist in the traditions of a West-African tribe. Like Frobenius, Björkman has added a novel and enjoyable chapter to the speculative literature of his subject. And what more, after all, can one ask of an Atlantean theory?

It may be just as well not to look a fiction horse too closely in the mouth. The Professor, the quadruped reporter of *They Also Serve*, by Peter B. Kyne (Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, $2.00) belongs to the very aristocracy of the stalls and feed-boxes, but he starts life as a cow pony, gets smuggled to France when his owner enlists in the artillery, and returns to end his days on a California ranch. The illustrated novel, extinct since the war, returns with this book.



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## Answers to the Guedalla Questionnaire

1. "Corinthian" was a term applied to men of fashion in the early 19th century. They succeeded the Dandies, and preceded the Swells.

2. Characters in Egan's "Life in London".

3. Disraeli.

4. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Carlyle. *Chico* — "Crossing Belgrave Square *Chico* burst out into singing, which we all strove to accept as a promising omen."

5. (a) Earl Spencer, father of Lord Althorp. The fortunes of the Ministry rested on Lord Althorp's presence in the House of Commons. His father's death removed him to the House of Lords. (b) Tadpole and Taper, electioneering agents, Right Honorable Nicholas Rigby, "dirty worker", and Lord Fitz-Booby are characters in Disraeli's "Coningsby" in which the incident is used.

6. In contemporary caricatures Louis Philippe is usually represented carrying an umbrella, a symbol of his unmilitariness.

7. Augusta of Saxony, wife of Frederick, Prince of Wales. George III.

8. Jorrocks, nom de plume of R. S. Surtees and character in his novels, represents the sporting world. Sidonia, mysterious Spanish Jew in "Coningsby", represents the world of finance. Rastignac, character in Balzac's *"Père Goriot"*, represents the Parisian world of fashion of the period.

9. When France and Spain seemed to have been united by the accession of Louis XIV's grandson, Philippe, duc d'Anjou, to the Spanish throne, le Roi Soleil is said to have exclaimed, "Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées".

10. (a) John T. Delane, editor of The Times, which was called "The Thunderer" (Jupiter Tonans). (b) The Honorable Mrs. Norton, who, in the last year of her life married Sir W. Stirling-Maxwell. (c) "Diana of the Crossways", by Meredith.

11. (a) The Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV. (b) Beau Brummel. (c) Richard Mansfield in Clyde Fitch's "Beau Brummel".

12. (a) Lord Melbourne. (b) His wife, formerly Lady Caroline Ponsonby. (c) She had an affair with Lord Byron, author of "The Corsair".


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# The BOOK MART

IN another month the stream of catalogues from the book auction houses will begin to flow, although it is not likely to reach flood proportions before the beginning of another year. When the collectors are taking a rest from their favorite pursuit in summer, and have exchanged their surplus volumes for golf balls, the dealers and book auctioneers are kept busy in trying to find something to sell. Looking back to the days when the late Henry E. Huntington paid $50,000 for a Gutenberg Bible at the Hoe sale in 1911, and those later days when the Huntington duplicates came into the market, the last season appears very tame. Yet a single sale may make a season notable, as did the John L. Clawson sale two years ago, when a Gutenberg Bible brought $103,000, and more than half a million dollars' worth of books were dispersed at the Anderson Galleries in two days.

Book auctioneers are wary about making preliminary announcements of important sales until the catalogues are prepared. But it is no secret among the inner circles of bookland that the William A. White library is to come into the market this season. The late Mr. White of Brooklyn was one of the great book collectors. Last year he had published a catalogue of his collection of early English literature, compiled by Henrietta C. Bartlett, which described, or rather listed briefly, several hundred of the rarest books in that field, including more than one hundred and twenty-five items of Shakespeareana — Folios, quartos and other editions. Mr. White was a fastidious collector. Bibliographers have argued whether the first issue of the first edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost", 1667, should have Milton's name on the title in large or small capitals. In order to be sure that he had the correct first issue, Mr. White secured both those with the name in large capitals and small capitals, bearing the correct date, and incidentally, a copy with the third title.

The sale of this library, the catalogue of which is now being compiled, will not include all of Mr. White's books. Some years ago he disposed of two lots of 100 books each, one being composed wholly of the rarest of Americana and the other of English literature. But the portion to be disposed of at auction will attract the attention of book collectors not only from all over this country, but from the other side.

Mr. White was a member of the Overseers' Committee of Harvard University, and was a graduate of the Class of 1863. He had been a specialist in many lines of collecting, having at different times taken up first editions of American authors, Keats, Shelley, William Blake and the authors of what he called "The Decade", from 1592 to 1603, the most glorious ten years in English literature. He knew his books, and was delighted to place them at the service of scholarship at any time. With a wonderful memory, he was always able to supply information on recondite subjects, and being a thorough student he was always seeking for conclusive references.

Having turned from first editions of American authors to other fields of inquiry Mr. White, soon after he became a member of the Harvard Overseers' Committee, sent his entire collection of "firsts" to the Harvard University library with instructions to keep whatever was wanted, generously suggesting that in all cases of doubt the Harvard authorities should retain the book. The result was that Harvard filled many important gaps in its collection of American first editions, which is now in a state approaching completeness. Mr. White's copies were in the finest procurable condition, and in many of them he had made copious notes of bibliographical peculiarities or other important features. His death, on May 6th of the present year, removed one of the great old-time collectors who gathered books without an eye to their market value.

(*Continued on page XLII*)



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*(Continued from page XL)*

Christopher Morley has been having a lot of fun over his one contribution to seventeenth century scholarship, which was printed privately by Morley Kennerley in an edition of 100 copies. Mr. Morley put forth the discovery that the epitaph, "O Rare Ben Jonson" was really intended for "Orare Ben Jonson", — (taphouse Latin) — and supports his contention with evidence from Aubrey's "Lives". The London Times took up the matter in all seriousness, Mr. Morley being an American citizen of British parentage and a scholar of Oxford, and granted it "at least the merit of plausibility". M. H. Spielmann, the well-known British critic, came back in the Times with a rejoinder which is serious to the point of ponderousness, and proves that there is nothing whatever in Mr. Morley's "one contribution to seventeenth century scholarship", robbing him of his wee one ewe lamb. Mr. Spielmann quotes Mr. Morley as asking the question "Was Jack Young (Sir John Young, who had the inscription cut) a punster?" and says: "On sounder grounds, I think, one may ask: 'Is Mr. Christopher Morley an American humorist?'" Meanwhile collectors are scurrying around among the booksellers trying to get hold of one of those 100 copies of Morley Kennerley's "My One Contribution to Scholarship" — only a little eight-page tract in large type, but now precious.

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